



# FRANK LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER

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THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION IN NEW YORK CITY.—SCENE IN THE ALDERMANIC CHAMBER ON THE CONFIRMATION OF MAYOR COOPER'S NOMINATIONS, DECEMBER 10TH.—SEE PAGE 267.



FRANK LESLIE'S  
ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER,  
53, 55 & 57 PARK PLACE, NEW YORK.  
NEW YORK, DECEMBER 25, 1880.

## CAUTION.

Persons desiring to subscribe for any of our publications should be careful to send their remittances and orders to the street numbers—53, 55 and 57 Park Place—of Frank Leslie's Publishing House. Of our publications there are various imitations which may profit from the absence of proper care in this particular. It should be distinctly understood that we never employ traveling agents to solicit subscriptions or collect money for us. Subscribers can remit direct by sending Post Office Money Order, Draft on New York, or Registered Letter, at our risk. In all cases write the address plainly and in full.

In his recent decision sustaining the will of the late Frank Leslie, Surrogate Calvin said of certain imitations of our publications which are now issued in this city, and for which some persons have subscribed in the belief that they were ours: "It is quite apparent that they (the publications aforesaid) were calculated to deceive, and to some extent interfere with the decedent's publications, and when the name Leslie & Co. was printed upon the covers of two of them, the copy of one of decedent's headlines—'The Cheapest Magazine in the World'—placed conspicuously at the top of the cover of the alleged simulated publication and others entitled Frank Leslie, Jr. (when the latter at the suit of his father had ceased to use the name for several years, and resumed it at a time when decedent's business calamities were oppressing him), it may well be doubted whether it needed even an unusually suspicious mind to reach the conclusion not only that they were calculated to deceive, but that they were so intended."

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

THE annual Message of President Hayes is a lucid, terse and well-considered paper, which covers the whole field of our federal relations, and is so judicious in the most of its recommendations and suggestions that it may be said to call rather for simple analysis than for polemical criticism. Opening with a reference to alleged fraudulent practices which have impaired the integrity of the ballot in several of the late slave-holding States, he remarks that "this disposition to refuse a prompt and hearty obedience to the equal rights amendments to the Constitution is all that now stands in the way of a complete obliteration of sectional lines in our political contests." In so writing, the President (perhaps without intending it), has pointed a moral in praise of his own upright and pacific dealing with the Southern States, in having lifted from them the military coercion which was formerly pleaded in extenuation of the sectional hostility to the Federal Government. We have but to contrast the attitude of these States to-day with the attitude in which they were left by the administration of General Grant, to measure the progress which has been made toward a permanent pacification of the country on the basis of the new rights embodied in the war amendments. And, while calling for "firm and well-considered action" to repress the future manifestations of these encroachments on the elective franchise, he proposes to cut the root of the evil by providing for an education which shall be as universal at the South as the right of suffrage. "The best and surest guarantee of the primary rights of citizenship is to be found," says the President, "in that capacity for self-protection which can belong only to a people whose right to universal suffrage is supported by universal education." The enforcement of this single maxim would be better than a whole arsenal of repressive statutes.

Next in dignity and importance to this "paramount question," the President places the urgent necessity of a reformation of the civil service of the Government in all its departments. On this subject he speaks with no bated breath, for he spares himself as little as his own party when he says that his observation and experience in the Executive office have only strengthened his opinions concerning the dangers of public patronage when used as an implement of politics. "I believe," he says, "that these dangers threaten the stability of the Government," and he therefore calls for the instant adoption of practical measures and plans which shall put an end to the "spoils system" in all its relations—to the bestowal of public places as a perquisite for political services, and to the subordination of political corruption by levying contributions on the office-holding class for the purpose of carrying elections against the unbiased will of the people. On the whole subject the President leaves some good advice to his successor when, contrary to a supposed suggestion contained in General Garfield's letter of acceptance, Mr. Hayes

urges, as "the first step in a reform of the civil service," that there "must be a complete divorce between Congress and the Executive in the matter of appointments." And this representation he bases as forcibly on grounds of constitutional obligation as on considerations of public expediency. Perhaps, when General Garfield wrote that the Executive, in making appointments, should seek "information and assistance" of those whose knowledge "best qualified them to aid in making the wisest choice," he referred to others than members of Congress. Certain it is that Mr. Hayes recommends the passage of an Act "defining the relations of members of Congress with respect to appointments to office by the President," and no act would afford a better criterion by which to test the sincerity of the representative men in both parties, for both parties have witnessed a good confession on this subject. It is only their practice that is deficient.

The President does but speak in the language of political honesty and of a sound public economy when he renews his recommendation that the outstanding legal tender notes should be withdrawn and cancelled, according to the promise of the Government at the date of their issue. As to the expediency of recoining the depreciated silver dollar and making it equivalent in bullion value to the gold dollar we are not so clear in our minds, for such a step would commit the Government irrevocably to the policy of a bi-metallic currency, in which one of the metals used would have to be periodically readjusted to the market value of the other. We are well aware, as the President suggests, that all bi-metallic currencies proceed on this theory, and Michael Chevalier recommended in his day that such a readjustment should be made every six months, but, in point of fact, no nation under the sun has ever yet succeeded in establishing a permanent bi-metallic currency of equal standard value. The more stable of the two metals in point of market value will always be the standard for the time being. The President recognizes this fact to-day when he recommends that the silver dollar should be brought up to the standard of the gold dollar. Two metallic currencies we may have, but more than one metallic standard at a time we cannot have; and since, for the purposes of a subsidiary circulation, we already have more silver coin than the country will use, would it not be best to stop at once the further coinage of the silver dollar? If it were a question about using two yardsticks of unequal length, or two bushel measures of unequal cubic contents, does anybody doubt what the answer would be?

The advocates of silver coinage assured us a few years ago that the remonetization of the silver dollar would be followed by a rise in the commercial price of silver, and would constrain other nations to imitate our example. The result has shown how fallacious were these predictions. And if now we proceed, on our own mere motion, to raise the mint ratio between silver and gold, we shall only open a still wider chasm between our mints and the mints of those countries which adhere to the ratio of fifteen and a half. If we wish to invite concert and not to provoke antagonism, we must work with the currents of trade and the tendencies of modern civilization, not against them.

The recommendations of the President in regard to the revival of our foreign commerce fill the least satisfactory place in his Message. Professing an assurance that the wisdom of Congress will be ready to supply whatever modifications may be necessary to make our trade and navigation laws tributary to the enlargement of our exchanges and of our carrying trade, he makes no mention of free trade in ships, but hints at subsidies in furtherance of "regular postal communications" as being measures conducive to the development of our foreign commerce and the upbuilding of our carrying trade. That is, we are first to make ship-building unprofitable by the high tariff laid on ship-building materials, and then we are to double the cost of our own blunder by paying a premium on it out of the public moneys! It is strange that men who have the wisdom of business for themselves individually should so often be unwise in their public economy.

## THE ABUSES OF WILL CONTESTS.

THE decision of Surrogate Calvin sustaining the will of the late Frank Leslie naturally suggests a few remarks on the general subject of will contests, with the view of remedying existing abuses.

A contest over the estate of a decedent always awakens popular interest, and the public seems to imagine itself a self-appointed tribunal for the decision of such cases, without having the requisite knowledge of the law applicable thereto, and without any of the evidence necessary for finding the facts, except such as may be picked up from meagre newspaper reports. Add to this that there are many widespread fallacies in relation to the law, and it must be conceded that the popular verdict is

most unlikely to be a correct one either in its sympathies or its judgment. One of these fallacies is that a testator cannot lawfully disinherit a child—an error probably derived from some vague ideas of the system of entailed estates in England, or the practice of some continental countries where the civil law prevails, and where the right of disposition by will is subject to some restrictions. The law in this State, however, is and has always been that a man may will his property to strangers in preference to his children, if he choose, and the only exception to his general power of disposal is the well-known provision in favor of his widow, called dower.

But while in theory this right of a testator to do as he wishes with his own is apparently unlimited, yet, owing to the facilities afforded by the law to any dissatisfied heir who may undertake to contest, the fact is that the will is frequently overruled on technical grounds, while in nearly every instance of late years where such a contest has been had the beneficiaries have only succeeded in maintaining their rights after a severe and protracted struggle, carried on at a great expense peculiarly, to say nothing of the great damage to their feelings in the shape of undeserved notoriety, malicious aspersions and the unnecessary exposure of family matters, which are the usual stock in trade of the contestants in such cases. And for all this the law provides no remedy. In fact, until the new Code went into effect in September last the contestants could, and generally did, receive out of the estate large allowances in lieu of costs. Even though their allegations impeaching the will were held to be utterly unfounded, and while such was the law, certain lawyers could always be found ready to undertake such contests without any confidence as to the result of their efforts in the litigation, but with great confidence as to obtaining costs.

In another class of cases there has been a similar procedure based upon greater expectations, supported by the most indefensible practices. To illustrate: A man dies with a large fortune or a fair competency, acquired by his own talent and industry. He is known to the hour of death as a keen, able and successful business man. By his will he sees fit, for reasons satisfactory to himself, to discriminate in the selection of the objects of his bounty between those who have been faithful to him to the end, and those who, though of his own blood, have repaid his kindness by ingratitude and misconduct. The latter immediately after his will is made known raise for the first time the charge of insanity, and file the allegations necessary to raise that issue—not in the expectation of establishing his lunacy, but because, under the pretense of evidence on that point, such a great latitude is allowed that a man's habits, daily life and conversation for years may be inquired into, his failings brought to light, his most sacred relations with others trifled with and scandalized, to the end that those who have received his bequests and value his memory will shrink from such an ordeal, and make a compromise by giving a substantial portion to those who show conclusively by these acts that they are unworthy of it. Such cases are fresh in the minds of the public; and it is but justice to the able and conscientious judge who now fills the position of Surrogate of New York to say that he has faithfully endeavored to confine the testimony offered on such points to the most rigid rules of evidence, and to exclude all matters which could only be intended to bring reproach upon the living. The evil, however, can scarcely be remedied by legislation or judicial action. The most effective remedy is in the voice of public opinion.

The recent provision prohibiting the allowance of costs to unsuccessful contestants is only a step in the right direction. In addition to the grievances indicated, it is well known that these will contests frequently last for years, during which the estate is virtually tied up, great inconvenience and sometimes great loss ensues, yet the parties whose frivolous objections have produced these results are not compelled to make any compensation therefor. The law should be amended by providing that where the Surrogate decides that the contest was not instituted in good faith, the contestants should be liable for all the damages and expenses incurred by the other parties. Such an enactment would materially lighten the calendar of the Surrogate's Court.

Another much-needed provision would be the exercise by the Legislature of the power given by the Constitution of transferring probate cases, where questions of fact are to be determined, to the courts where the ordinary jury trials are held. There is no reason why a jury should not be as competent a tribunal to ascertain whether a testator is insane, as in the case of a murderer, or why, in the latter case, the inquiry should occupy a day or two, and in the former, a year or two. The Surrogate of New York is probably the hardest-worked judge in the country, and his business is constantly increasing. It would be an act of mercy as well as justice to him to remove mere questions of fact from his jurisdiction,

leaving to him the ample field where the higher questions of law are to be determined.

## A LIVE QUESTION.

THE publication of articles upon the Sunday question in the current number of two of our more prominent monthlies proves that this question has obtained a more popular hearing than ever before. It is becoming a matter of immediate interest to every man whether the Sabbath of Puritan tradition is to be retained, nominally at least, as one of our institutions, or whether the continental Sunday is to be substituted in its place, or whether, indeed, we have any use for such a thing as a day of rest at all. Side by side with this view of the question, it is noteworthy that, with the new awakening of interest in most questions in Europe, the attempt is there being made to establish what is called the English Sabbath. To this end a Sabbath Association has been formed, which is already somewhat widely spread and influential, so that it is quite among the possibilities that by such time as we shall have fairly established among us the continental Sunday, the old-fashioned New England Sabbath may have been adopted in France and Germany and Belgium.

It is not surprising that in this country the pendulum should be swinging to the side of laxity from the rigid severity of a former time, nor that in the old world it should tend towards strictness in reaction from too great license; but at this period of the world's enlightenment it surely ought to be possible so to collate the results of both experiences as from them to discover what it is that society in the present day really needs in the matter of a day of rest.

The people on the continent have evidently found something worthy of imitation in that traditional Sabbath which we are in such haste to do away with. They are trying to close the drinking-saloons, and do away with Sunday travel, and forbid Sunday work in factory and store. Experience has shown them that when men are compelled to work on Sunday they indemnify themselves first by lying idle on Monday, and that when, on the other hand, Sunday is given them as a holiday, at least half of Monday is still lost in getting over the effects of the preceding day's debauch. This is so universally the case in France, where intemperance has increased with alarming rapidity since the Franco-Prussian war, that Holy Monday has become a proverb. As for the employ's upon railroads, it is found that the moral and physical deterioration consequent upon incessant work has very notably increased the risk of accident and the consequent loss of life and property. A noteworthy instance of the harm arising from unrespected labor has lately come to view in the case of the St. Gothard tunnel, where the imperative necessity of completing the work within a given time has led to its being pushed forward with no intermission for a rest-day. The result has been such a melting away of the laborers from disease and demoralization as very seriously to cripple the contractors in their undertaking. Hygienic considerations aside, it is possible that we scarcely realize the moral effect of a stated "clean-shirt day," nor how easily man may lapse into savage degradation when no recurring day of rest calls for that outward purification which is supposed to typify the inward renovation wrought by spiritual communion.

If the continental view of Sunday is found wanting when weighed in the balance of experience, it remains for those who are planning a change in the American observance of the day to devise some means of avoiding the evils which are thus plainly held up to their view. There can be no doubt that the rigid self-denial of the Puritan Sabbath is to some characters tonic and healthful, nor that the absolute rest and quiet with its opportunities for meditation, will always be exquisitely grateful to minds of a certain cast; but it is equally certain that upon the majority of characters its effects have been far from salutary. The mass of our citizens, whatever their real wants may be, are aware rather of their need of concerts and lectures, free exhibitions and cheap excursions, open halls for social intercourse and public amusement, than of opportunities for religious culture.

But since "the liberty of rest for one must be the law of rest for all," there is a difficulty, inherent in the rights of man, in providing for these felt wants, aside from the question whether, after all, the public weal is really considered by any such provision. It would seem that the settling of this perplexing question might appropriately be remitted from the political economists to the Christian Churches. For the sake of that humanity whose interests they profess to hold dearer than do other men, they are especially interested in it. With all the resources at their command, the higher enlightenment which, on the whole, belongs to them, the far-reaching philanthropy which is their professed business, and the



practically unlimited funds at their disposal, it is for them to grapple with this question. We challenge them to take it up, and to provide for our people something which shall answer more nearly than anything which civilization has yet known to the highest ideal of a Sabbath which was made for man.

#### THE MUNICIPAL REVOLUTION.

THE downfall of Mr. John Kelly marks, as we believe, a pronounced new departure in the methods of our municipal administration. It certainly puts an end to that autocratic system under which the worst elements of the community have been arrogantly advanced to supreme control, and honorable and decent men have been largely driven from the sphere of public service. Mr. Kelly is, as we do not doubt, an honest man, but he has, by his official and political course, deliberately and continuously affronted the public sense of propriety and the whole code of political morals, and he goes to the wall at last because, in his lust of power and his overweening confidence in his peculiar methods, he forgot that a virtuous public opinion, once thoroughly aroused, is in every crisis involving great interests absolutely invincible. The men who have been promoted to official station by this latest municipal revolution are fair representatives of the better elements of the two political parties, and the public will look to them with confidence for that reform in very many directions which is almost universally felt to be an urgent necessity.

#### ECHOES FROM ABROAD.

THE Irish situation increases in gravity. The British Government seems paralyzed and utterly unable to cope with the energetic tactics of the Land Leaguers. Mr. Parnell, who has until now alleged that he merely aimed at a thorough revision of the land laws, has thrown off the mask, and in a recent speech made a plain declaration that what his party desired was nothing less than a complete separation from England. Under these circumstances the Government has felt obliged to do something, and it is more than probable that Mr. Parnell will be criminally indicted on a further charge. The preparations for the trial of the persons already indicted are being pushed. Mr. Gladstone has issued a circular to the members of the House of Commons, desiring their attendance in Parliament for important business, which he says will at once be proceeded with. The more influential members of the Cabinet are in favor of coercion, and such men as Lord Hartington, Lord Selborne and the Duke of Argyll are said to be anxious that some immediate repressive steps should be taken. Mr. Forster, the Secretary for Ireland, a man of advanced liberal opinions, has made up his mind that something must be done, and has issued a circular letter to the magistrates and justices of the peace, calling their attention to the fact that they have the power to commit all persons holding illegal assemblies or using unloyal words. It is also rumored that Earl Cowper, the Lord Lieutenant, has threatened to resign unless the Government adopt a more energetic policy. Meanwhile, the most shocking outrages are being perpetrated, and the reign of terrorism is practically absolute.

In Germany affairs are quiet, with the exception of the religious questions. The petition against the Jews has called forth a protest which has had greater success. In the University towns the pro-Semitic feeling is quite strong, and although there is a very great dislike throughout the country at large to the Jewish population, still it is felt that any public or official proclamation of it is wrong and against the spirit of an enlightened age. In the Prussian Diet the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, when replying to a question of the Ultramontane leader, said that the Government very much regretted that such little progress had been made in the attempt to reconcile the differences of the Roman Catholics. He stated that the Government, by the introduction of the former Bill, had done all that lay in their power to quiet the troubles which exist with the Vatican, and that the Ultramontanes, by rejecting the Bill, had taken it out of the hands of the Government to take any further action, for they could not expose themselves to another defeat. Under these circumstances, the Government declines to interfere, and have resolved to await further developments.

In Europe the finance question is once more coming to the front. The extraordinary strides that the United States have made in material prosperity during the last few years, and the enormous supplies of provisions which have been shipped from here to the other side of the Atlantic, cause a severe drain upon the treasuries of the Old World. In France this drain has been so great as to call for some Governmental interference, and M. Maguin, the Minister of Finance, being questioned by M. Soubeyran acknowledged that there was a diminution in the stock of gold consequent upon an adverse balance of trade. The Minister stated that he was prepared to advance the rate of discount of the Bank of France, and to put into circulation bank notes for sums below one hundred francs. M. Soubeyran called attention to the further drain which the redemption of the debt of the United States would bring about, and advised the Government to begin negotiations with Germany and the United States. It was also pointed out that the decision of the Monetary Conference, some years ago in Paris, left the door open for

a bi-metallic currency. Another disturbing element is to be found in the Bill now before the Italian Parliament for redeeming Italy's forced paper currency. The Bill in its present shape has been favorably received, but it is generally admitted that several important alterations must be made. The paper currency was introduced into Italy in 1866, at a time when the Italo-Prussian alliance had just been concluded. Italy had engaged to make war upon Austria, and her funds were selling as low as forty-eight. The Finance Minister found that money could not be borrowed at any price, and the only available means was to contract a loan with the National Government and thus issue a forced paper currency. This was successfully accomplished, and Italian manufacturers have been enabled to compete with the rest of the world even when gold was at a premium of ten and fifteen per cent. It is now found that by abolishing the paper currency a large saving will be made, and that the finances will be placed upon a more sound footing. In Russia, also, there is a movement on foot for financial reform. M. Banque has been appointed Vice-Minister of Finance, and as he is a well-known political economist and an excellent practical financier, it is hoped that he will be able to invent some method by which the daily depreciation of the ruble can be stopped. The annual importations into Russia exceed 500,000,000 rubles, and the exports are scarcely 300,000,000 rubles. Yet Russia is one of the richest countries in the world, and an active and wise administration of her finances ought to work marvels.

Another movement likely to prove interesting to Americans are the present agricultural changes in Egypt. During our civil war the exportation of cotton was enormous and at paying prices. But of late years, it has turned out that even the yearly addition to the soil of the country by the inundation of the Nile has proved inadequate to support the exhaustion of an annual crop of cotton. There is in Egypt an excellent field for American products, but there is no cargo which can be returned. An attempt is now being made to grow jute, which is extensively used here, and it looks as if America will soon find another market for her wares, taking jute in exchange.

THE Vermont Legislature has passed a prohibitory liquor law of a very stringent character. The Act makes any place where liquor is sold or given away, or where gambling is allowed, a nuisance; provides that the place shall be closed, and holds the keeper liable to fine and imprisonment. Such a law can scarcely fail to exterminate the traffic at which it is aimed, if backed by a vigorous public opinion.

THE subscriptions in Europe to the Panama Canal scheme are said to have been a complete success, exceeding the total amount of shares offered, so that a considerable reduction will be made to the subscribers in the allotment. The subscriptions in this city are reported at \$8,000,000. It is said that Secretary of the Navy Thompson will accept the presidency of the Canal Company. The effectual conservation of American interests on the Isthmus will be the subject of a conference between the Secretary and the House Naval Committee.

THE first Bill introduced in the House of Representatives, on the opening day of the session, was one for an appropriation for the improvement of the Tennessee River. All measures of this sort should be closely scanned. Of the 2,000 Bills now on the calendar of the House, a large majority involve schemes and jobs of one sort and another. Millions are asked for internal improvements of various kinds, and for public buildings. The House should set itself sternly against all legislation of this sort. There should be no expenditure of public money for any purpose not actually demanded by the public interests.

AMONG the subjects which will no doubt command attention at the present session of Congress is that of inter-State commerce, which attained a good deal of prominence in the last Congress. It is believed that on a square vote there will be found a majority in both Houses in favor of the naked proposition that Congress undoubtedly has the right to regulate commerce between the States. Any Bill which avoids unjust discriminations will probably have a hearty support. With the great influence of the railroad corporations arrayed against it, Reagan's Inter-State Commerce Bill was defeated in the Commerce Committee by only three votes, and two of the members who voted against the Bill did so, not because they were in favor of the principle *per se*, but because they favored a modification of the Bill.

THE appointment of Colonel William B. Hazen as Chief Signal Officer of the Army is not the best that could have been made. Indeed, it is difficult to understand upon what possible ground it can be justified. The natural and proper thing for the President to have done was to have nominated some officer who has been connected with the service from the start, and who is fairly entitled to promotion by efficiency and fidelity in the performance of his duties. The meteorological work of this Bureau is a specialty, and is withal so important and its extension so desirable, that the highest qualifications should have been sought in the successor of its founder, General Myer; and it seems like an insult to competent and trained officials to boost into his place, over their heads, a person whose only recommendation seems to lie in the fact that he is able to control certain political and army influences in his own behalf, with-

out reference to the interests of the public service. The Philadelphia Times well expresses the general estimate of this nomination when it says:

"It is not at all likely that any one will have the presumption to set up a claim that the appointment was made on its merits, since General Hazen is not known to have the first qualification for the place, and there are many well-equipped from whom the choice could and should have been made. It is singularly ludicrous that on the day when the President was lecturing the country on the subject of civil service reform, which is presumed to mean the filling of positions with those best fitted for them, he should have made such an appointment as this. It baffles every idea of civil service reform. General Hazen is one of those fortunately not very common army officers whose business has chiefly been to hang about the palace of power for something comfortable, and such have the most unaccountable facilities, regardless of civil service reform, for getting the places which they should not have."

THE Secretary of the Treasury, in his annual report, recommends the issue of a bond bearing not more than 3.65 per cent. interest, and redeemable after fifteen years, the proceeds to be applied to the payment of bonds redeemable on or before July 1st, 1881. The Ways and Means Committee of the House has done better than this, and by a unanimous vote has agreed to substitute 3 per cent. for 3½ per cent., the rate of interest fixed in the Wood Bill for refunding the maturing bonds. Some members of the committee express the belief that a 2 per cent. bond can be floated just as successfully as a 3 per cent., and amendments to the proposed Bill may be offered to this effect. Mr. Kelley will present an amendment in the nature of a substitute to provide for the gradual payment of the debt from the surplus revenues of the Government.

OCEAN telegraphy has attained an extent and scope which the projectors of the system could scarcely have foreseen. The length of different cables, in nautical miles, is thus stated in a recent publication: Anglo-American (Ireland to Newfoundland) 1,850 miles, and from Newfoundland to Sydney, N.S., over 300 miles, a total distance of about 2,150 for each of its three cables; the Anglo-French cable from Brest (by way of St. Pierre) to Duxbury, about 3,329 miles; the Direct United States cable from Ireland to Torbay and from Torbay to Rye Beach, 2,360 miles; and the new French cable from Brest to Louisburg, 2,430 miles; from St. Pierre to Cape Cod, 880 miles, and from Brest to Penzance, 151 miles; a total length of about 3,461 miles. Two new Atlantic cables, which it is now proposed to lay, will each add 2,400 miles to the system. These cables, when laid, are to be operated in connection with the land lines of the American Union Telegraph Company.

NO CLASS of men in the public service are entitled to higher consideration for fidelity and efficiency than the surfmen attached to the life saving crews on the Atlantic coast. It is pleasant to find that the Government recognizes this fact, and is disposed to honor the men who so often peril their lives in the service of others. The members of one of the crews on the New Jersey coast have just received gold medals in recognition of their splendid daring during one of the terrible storms of last winter, and the precedent will, no doubt, be followed in other cases, and the tone of the service thereby generally improved. The crews on the New Jersey coast are all composed of picked surfmen, upon whom the terrors of the sea in its angriest moods have no influence whatever when duty calls them to do and dare.

SOME interesting facts as to the negro exodus were given by Governor St. John of Kansas in a recent interview. He states that the emigration from the South continues without diminution, about seventy-five per cent. of the emigrants locating in Kansas. For the most part, they are self-sustaining, only 500 of the 40,000 who have gone into the State being now in receipt of assistance. Governor St. John says: "When once they get off of the relief associations' hands they never come back, and many of them get homes of their own within two years. In my judgment the exodus of the negro from the South is a movement of greater importance than is generally attached to it. It may end in the complete demoralization of labor in the South. The Southern whites have got to give them protection or they will move North. I have no doubt that many now in Kansas would return to their old Southern homes if they were guaranteed protection to life, money and their elective franchise."

THE Mormons are displeased with the suggestions of the President's Message in reference to their "peculiar institution." The Gentile organs, on the contrary, are delighted with the proposition to have Congress revoke a clause of the Act organizing the Territory and to govern the Territory in a way which shall compel obedience to the laws of the United States. One of these papers says:

"The Mormon sect in Utah has increased until they have become a menace to free institutions in the West. Perjury is taught as a virtue when necessary to evade laws, and a system as despotic and as slavish as ever prevailed in Mohammedan countries is swiftly becoming a tremendous power here. The truth is, the time has come for vigorous measures. It is as certain as anything in the world that were polygamy abandoned nine out of every ten Mormon women in Utah would praise God. Polygamy has imbruted men enough and broken the hearts of women enough to justify any means to destroy it. Hence we rejoice at the President's words, and shall look after Congress to see whether hereafter the corruption fund of the Mormon Church can prevail any more in Congress or not. The plan suggested is a legal one, easily effected, and the only peaceable one."

#### NEWS OF THE WEEK.

##### Domestic.

DAKOTA asks for admission to the Union as a State.

MR. P. T. BARNUM remains seriously ill at the residence of a relative in this city.

GENERAL JOHN F. MILLER will probably succeed United States Senator Booth of California.

ANXIETY is felt at Gloucester, Mass., for the safety of seven of the "Bank" fleet of fishermen.

THE Pension Bill, appropriating \$50,000,000, has been presented in the House of Representatives.

GENERAL ORD, who has just been placed on the retired list, will, it is rumored, make Mexico his future home.

THE decline in grain and provisions which lately set in at Chicago aggregate a value approximating \$1,100,000.

THREE judges of election in Manchester, Va., have been indicted for refusing the right of suffrage to legal voters.

It is said that the American subscriptions to the Panama Canal shares reached \$3,600,000 on the day the books were opened.

CAPTAIN PAYNE and 400 colonists left Arkansas City for the Indian Territory last week. They were followed by a company of cavalry.

THE exodus of negroes has caused a scarcity of labor in several Southern States, especially on the sugar and cotton plantations of Louisiana.

THE joint committee in charge of the proposed extension of the Congressional library will probably report a Bill for the erection of a new building.

A STORY that Senator Blaine has been offered the portfolio of Secretary of State in General Garfield's Cabinet is promptly denied by that gentleman.

"DR." BUCHANAN, the Philadelphia dealer in fraudulent medical diplomas, has been sentenced to ten months' imprisonment and to pay a fine of \$500.

THERE is a coal famine in Nebraska, and citizens at some points on the Union Pacific Railroad have resorted to robbing coal trains to supply their needs.

It is believed that General O. O. Howard will be assigned to an Eastern command, and that General A. H. Terry will be placed in command at West Point.

THE United States Grand Jury of New York City has found indictments against the directors, captain, engineer and superintendent of the steamer *Sawankahaka*, for manslaughter.

GENERAL WALKER has informed Representative Cox that the census enumeration will be completed on the 22d instant, and in shape for presentation to Congress. Mr. Cox will then press his Apportionment Bill.

THE American Public Health Association held its annual session at New Orleans last week. A Quarantine Convention was also held, at which the question of quarantine on the Mississippi River was thoroughly discussed.

THE failure of E. G. Arnold & Co., of No. 125 Front Street, the largest house in the coffee trade in New York City, was announced last week. The liabilities are from \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000. The coffee-house of Bowle, Dash & Co., also suspended last week, with liabilities of \$1,400,000.

THE President's recommendation to make a Captain General of Grant has resulted in the introduction in the House of a resolution by Mr. McCook, authorizing the President to place General Grant on the retired list with the rank and pay of General. It was referred to the Military Committee, of which General McCook is a member.

It is said that President Hayes will appoint a Commission of five persons to visit the Ponca Indians and ascertain what ought to be done for their relief. General George Crook, United States Army; Bishop Clarkson, of Nebraska, and Walter Allen, of Boston, will be members of the Commission.

PRESIDENT GOWEN, of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, has submitted to the American Bondholders Committee a plan by which he hopes to save some \$3,000,000 to the road. The plan has been approved, and Mr. Gowen has sailed for Europe to see what can be done towards carrying it out.

THE General Assembly of Alabama adjourned on December 8th, and will reassemble February 1st. The time is a fifty-days' session, and the recess after thirty days to so distant a date in to receive census reports in order to apportion the Senators and Representatives in pursuance of the State Constitution, which requires it to be done after each census.

THE United States Supreme Court has made unusually rapid progress with the business of this term. In this connection it may be stated that both Justices Strong and Swayne contemplate retiring from the bench at the close of the present term, if not before. They are entitled to be pensioned on full pay. It is reported that ex-Senator Stanley Matthews will be made a Supreme Court Judge. His close relations to certain great railway corporations should preclude his acceptance.

##### Foreign.

THE British Admiralty have decided to abolish flogging in the navy.

THE revolt of the Kurds in Persia is over. Their leader is ready to submit.

EIGHTY-SIX lives were lost by an explosion in a colliery pit in Wales, December 10th.

A NUMBER of expelled French Jesuits are at Montreal, and will go to farming at Oka in the Spring.

It is intended to cover the very large increase in the Military Budget of the German Empire by a loan.

It is said in England that the United States will find no difficulty in floating bonds at 3 or 3½ per cent.

THE Lancashire Masters' Committee have recommended an advance of five per cent. in the wages of the weavers.

GREECE is said to be ready to enter into direct negotiations with Turkey for the settlement of the boundary question.

THE total Treasury receipts in Mexico for the past fiscal year were upwards of \$21,000,000, against \$16,000,000 in former years.

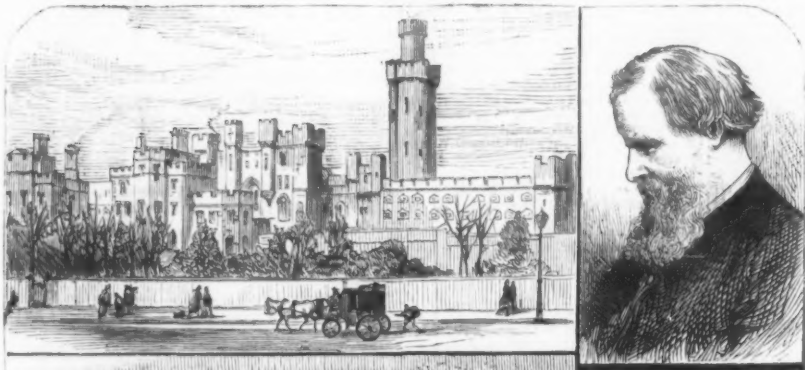
THE London Times, in commenting upon the President's Message, urges a final settlement of the whole fishery question by a new Commission.

THERE were 350 cases of small-pox and twenty deaths in Matamoros, Mexico, during October, and in the week ending November 20th, 300 cases and fifteen deaths.

THE German Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, in speaking of the grievances of the Catholics, says the Government intends to assume an expectant attitude while administering the existing law indulgently.



The Pictorial Spirit of the Illustrated Foreign Press.—SEE PAGE 267.



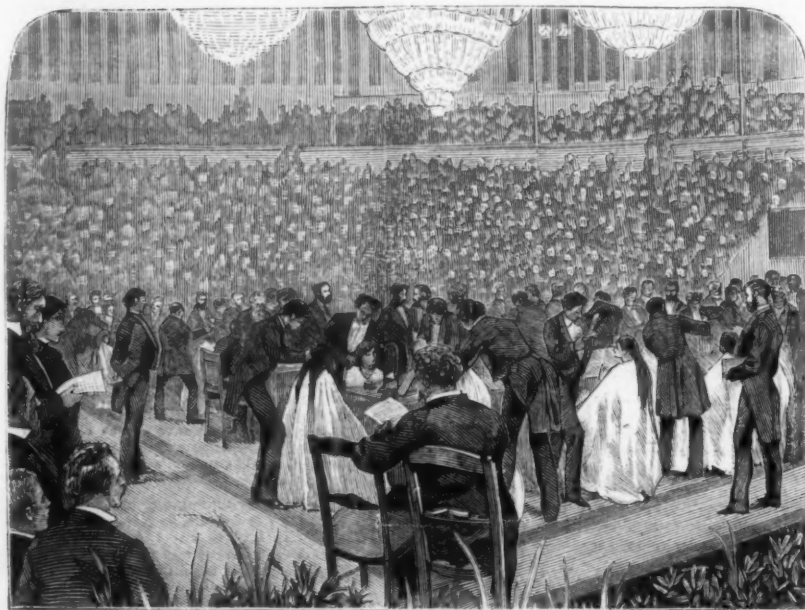
ENGLAND.—REV. T. P. DALE, RITUALIST, IN HOLLOWAY PRISON.



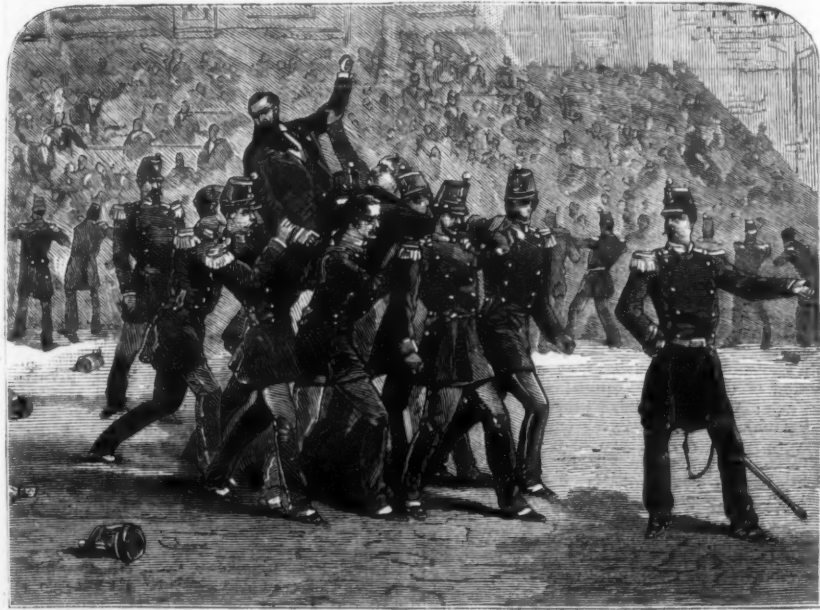
IRELAND.—CAPTAIN BOYCOTT AND HIS FAMILY GETTING IN THEIR HARVEST.



IRELAND.—TROOPS ESCORTING THE RELIEF LABORERS TO BALLINROBE.



FRANCE.—INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF BARBERS AT PARIS.

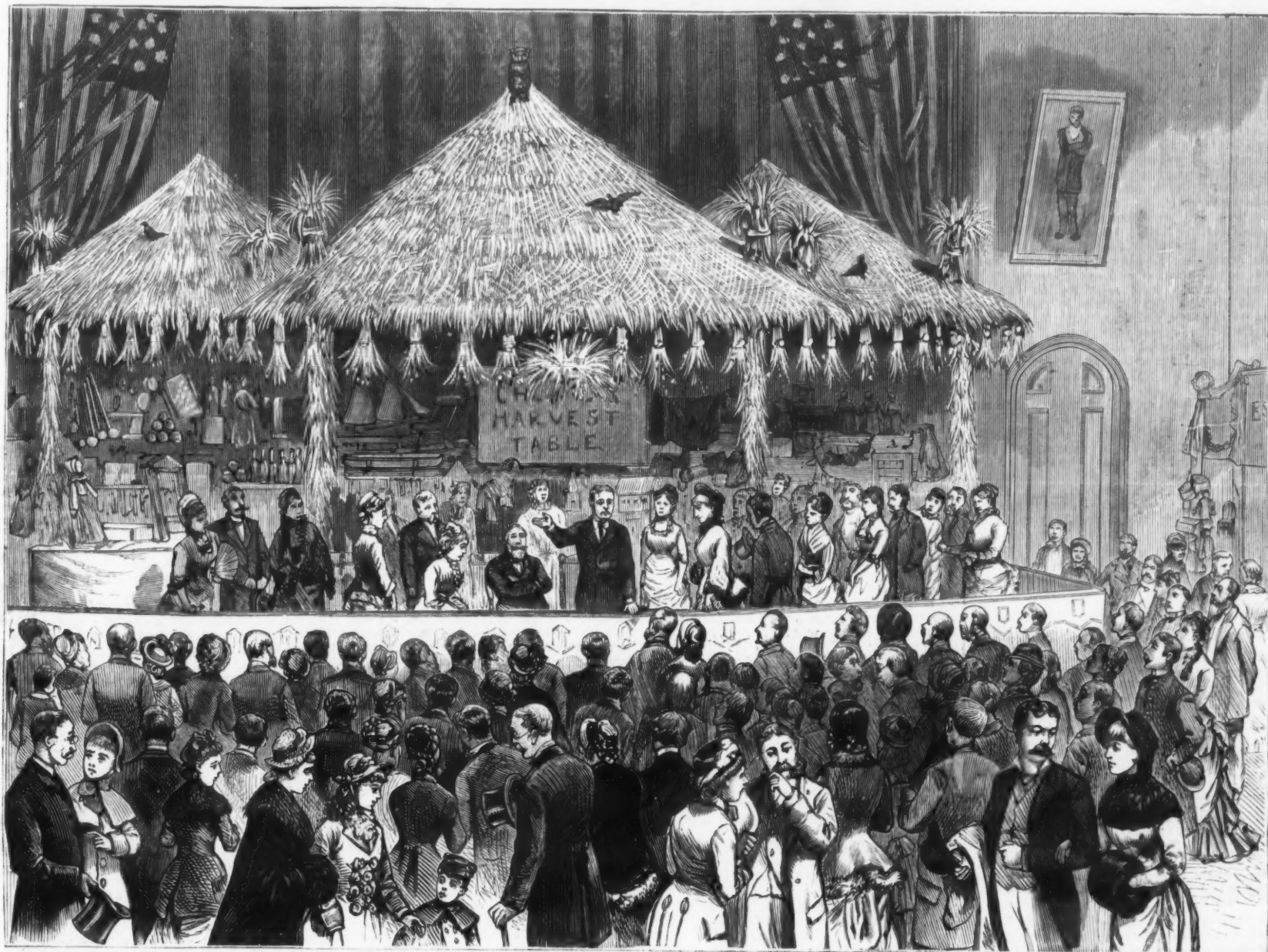


FRANCE.—EXPULSION OF M. BAUDRY-D'ASSON FROM THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES.

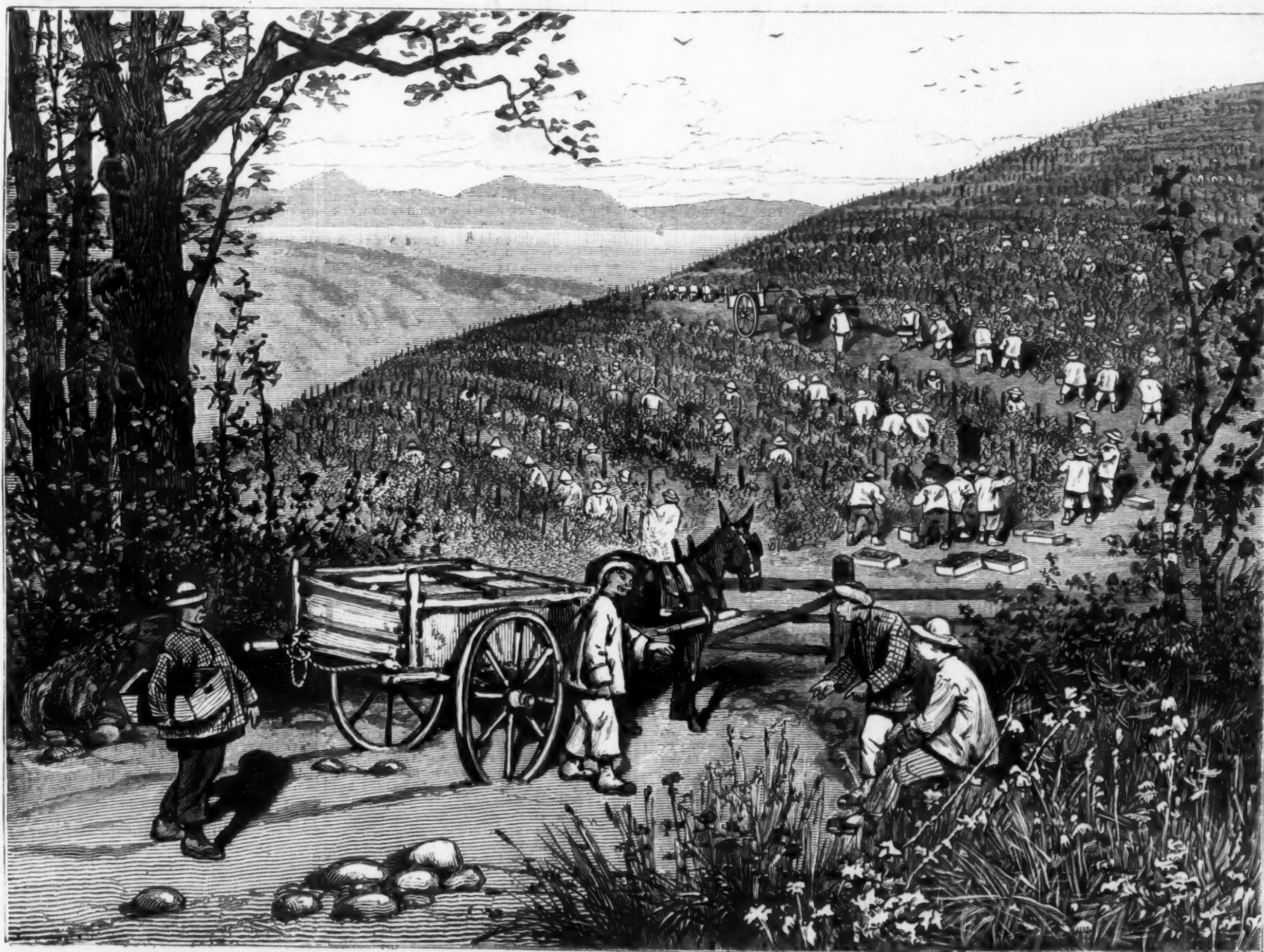


IRELAND.—THE LAND LEAGUE AGITATION—A RESIDENT LANDLORD TAKING MORNING LEAVE OF HIS FAMILY.





MASSACHUSETTS.—OPENING OF THE STATE FAIR FOR ABUSED CHILDREN IN HORTICULTURAL HALL, BOSTON, DECEMBER 8TH.—FROM A SKETCH BY JOS. BECKER.—SEE PAGE 271.



CALIFORNIA.—OUR NATIONAL INDUSTRIES—GRAPE-CULTURE IN THE SONOMA VALLEY.—FROM A SKETCH BY OUR SPECIAL ARTIST.—SEE PAGE 271.



## "BEING BLIND, I NOW SEE."

CHAPTER I.—A MORNING POST.

"ONLY one, and that one blind! Good heavens, how sad! Here, Joan, I want you. Come and read this. That's the end of all the dreams you've been dreaming, wife! No, be off, little ones," as two bonnie girls of six and seven trotted up like faithful pages of the house-queen; "let your mother stay with me alone."

"What is it, Francis?" said the wife, who was chief counselor, friend, helper, but not master of every member of the "Elizabeth's" household. "Nothing amiss with Geoff. is there?" as her tears flew off at a tangent to the one absent member of the family now in his second term of university perils. "Oh, then, with a sigh of relief as her husband shook his head, 'give me the letter, dear—or letters are they, and from Australia? Why, excitedly, 'it's from your Cousin Hugh! Oh, is he coming back? How strange the letter we've looked for so anxiously should come this morning, just when I wasn't thinking of it!'"

"Read it, Joan, or, rather, read them to me, if you can. Poor Hugh—poor fellow!"

"Why poor Hugh, Francis? He isn't dead?"

"Read me the letters, Joan; that," pointing to one scarcely legible page—"that is all I had glanced at when I called you."

Not one, but half a dozen sheets of paper, different in size and bearing different writing, lay on the table when Mrs. Beresford had emptied the large many stamped envelope of its contents.

Taking first the one her husband had pointed out, she read, growing tearful and tremulous as she went on:

"NEW SOUTH WALES, July 12th, 186--."

"DEAR FRANK—Three days ago your business budget came out to me. Just in time to be of no use. It's all up with me; the poor brute I was riding was not to blame, though. We might have had good times together if I'd lived, but I'm bound in another direction, and shall see the old place no more. We were always good friends, old fellow. You will take care of my"—(there came a great blur upon the paper here, and the falling hand had scarce found strength to trace the remaining lines—"my boy. He's the only one left, the eldest too, but he's blind. He has his mother's face; be good to him, pray be very"—and there the message from their dying kinsman ended in a scarcely decipherable "H. V. B.") painfully scrawled, as the next-read letter told them, "just afore the poor gentleman went off, which he did very comfortable and easy-like, fancies his wife, as had been dead these five years, was settin' by his side. And the horse, what he was so fond of, is just sold to a butcher. The beast was that fond of his master it would follow him like a dog, and when they found Mr. Beresford it was standin' by him, droopin' its head over him, and makin' hummerin' noises as if it wanted some one to help him."

"Poor old Hugh," broke in Francis Beresford, "just the same to the end! There wasn't a horse or a dog on the place yonder that didn't love him. How his life has been thrown away! Go on, Joan." His hand stole over his eyes as his wife finished the landlady's letter, which in its turn commended to these unknown gentlefolks the blind child whom she had grown to love.

"For he's as gentle as a little lady, and his poor father was as careful of him as if he was a lord. Rough it himself he would, and didn't care, but rough it the little one shouldn't, and there wasn't a better boy in all the colony than this one, and that his new friends would be kind to him would be the humble hope of their obedient servant,"

"SARAH TODD."

The other papers were a printed extract from the local journal giving a brief notice of Mr. Beresford's death—"from an accident caused by his horse stumbling in a rough spot known as 'Green's Gully';" a form, attested by doctor and clergyman, of the death and burial; and an informal but perfectly legal document, in the handwriting of the said clergyman, signed by the dying man, bequeathing all his worldly possessions to his only child, of whom his cousin, Francis Beresford, was made sole guardian. One more brief letter explained that the goods left by the deceased had been quickly sold to defray the expenses of his funeral and to discharge his few debts, leaving a balance sufficient to pay the passage money home for his child in the *Sea King*, which vessel would sail about the 3d of August, and might be expected in England any time after the second week in October.

This ended the communication, listened to in dead silence by Francis Beresford.

His wife watched him as he rose and paced the room, not caring to speak lest she should disturb the many recollections roused by this morning's news—recollections of the time, five and twenty years before, when he and this Cousin Hugh had been fast friends and almost brothers; when the old squire, their uncle, was living in full strength and health yonder at Kingsbrooke, caring for little in life beyond a good hunting season and the constant companionship of one or the other of his nephews. Ah, as he stood there by his study-window, could he see the old house that had been to him and Hugh as a home, standing out from its background of many tented Autumn woods, gray and turreted, and out of date, but comelier in his eyes than any modern dwelling, and the memory of the old free, careless days came back, when the future had seemed to be filled with brightness, and trouble was as remote as the Arctic regions!

But into these regions had they plunged, and lost for ever their Summer time of happy early manhood.

Hugh fell in love, and, alas, with the wrong woman! She might be well-born—indeed, in that point, there was little difference between the lovers—and she might be pretty; no one who looked at her sweet, fair face could deny that fact; and though she was practically poor, that, under other circumstances, need have been a matter of no moment; but the great offense was, that she was not of the squire's choosing, and in so important an affair as the choice of a wife for his eldest nephew

and successor at Kingsbrooke, the old man was determined to make his influence felt. Unreasonable, of course. Altogether miscalculating his power over his heir.

Hugh, furious at this, almost the first check he had known in any strong desire, turned a deaf ear to his cousin's advice, scorned prudence or patience as cowardly and unmanly virtues altogether beneath his lofty ideas of honor, bade his love to wait till he had made her a home across the sea, and with his heart full of bitterness went out from his boyhood's home, swearing never to return till his uncle should have repented and acknowledged his mistake.

Fancy that! The old man, who was the very soul of conservatism and obstinacy, repenting of anything, acknowledging himself in the wrong in any possible matter!

"Oh, Hugh, it was Greek against Greek," muttered Francis Beresford as he thought of these things; ay, and the tug-of-war broke off half the ties that had made the happiness of the elder man's life. He might ride, and he might hunt, and keep his four-footed friends about him; and he might still have in the one nephew who remained by him some one whose companionship pleased, whose interests occupied him; but with Hugh's exodus had gone forth, too his power of enjoying what was left him; thenceforth, though he carried himself bravely before men, the squire's days went heavily.

And Hugh, to the full as obstinate, every whit as proud, refused all pleading, of his cousin to return, refused the income offered through Francis, refused everything reasonable, never caring to realize the blank he had left in the old house. Hugging his pride, he struggled on in the wild southern colony where he had elected to try his fortune, while his faithful love wore out her youth and grew into faded middle-age before he could write and call her to the home he had at last made for her.

Twelve years of waiting, four years of wedded life, and then these two were parted by a stronger hand than their angry kinsman's. In his rare communication with his cousin, Hugh had spoken of two children being taken from him; an Australian paper alone had borne the news of his wife's death, since when no word had come from him, and the letters which told him of his uncle's death and the inheritance ready for him when he came to claim it had traveled in more than one wrong direction before they reached him in the new township where he had finally settled.

"And then," said Francis Beresford, still gazing wistfully at the old house in the hazy distance, "and then he lay dying, and his one boy is blind!"

He said it bitterly in spite of himself. A hand stole on his arm, and the voice by him said, ever so softly:

"We must make the little one happy when he comes to us! We must—"

"We must smooth the road for the rich and young, while we must plod along with our burdens on our backs; is that it, Joan?"

"Perhaps. But listen, Frank, dear. Don't let us think of our own disappointment; you know, when we've been talking about it all over we never felt certain that Hugh had no children; we only—"

"We only hoped it, eh, Joan? Well, hopes and uncertainties are done away with now; we must face our difficulties, such as they are, for there's no Hugh at hand to help us. Maud must get married with as little fuss as may be, and Geoff must knock off half his fancies at Cambridge. This poor little blind child inherits what he can never fully enjoy, and spoils the lives of those who are expected to be his best friends. Oh, it's a queer world!"

Disappointed in their uncle's legacy they had undoubtedly been; startled at the sum total of the small debts that her husband had allowed to accumulate, she had been; doubly disappointed both of them, when all their hopes of help from Hugh had been so suddenly dashed; and yet, as the wife set forth with infinite pains, leaning over her husband's chair, and caressing the short brown curls as yet unstreaked by gray, "and yet everything will come right. You will see how I will plan and manage now I know exactly what it is we owe. You need not be troubled, Francis dear; only set to work to think how you can do your best for this poor lad who is coming. Our children have us, you know; so they are, after all, much richer than he is!"

With that and a kiss upon the thick brown hair, she left him.

CHAPTER II.—A STRANGE HOME-COMING.

UNSETTLED and somewhat troubled days followed that important morning's post. Geoff, albeit a reasonable young fellow in the main, rebelled a little at the order for retrenchment that went forth. "If neither my father nor myself is ever likely to come in for Kingsbrooke," he wrote, "I suppose I shall have to live chiefly on my wits, and I should have thought the money paid for my coach wouldn't have been thrown away. I never can grind much alone. And I shall miss 'Highflyer' awfully. I do think if I take the set of rooms over mine they are lots cheaper, and not so very much worse than these, and work away like a brick by myself you might coax my father into letting me keep my old horse. Only you needn't worry yourself, mother: I'll try and pull your way, if you say I must."

As with Geoff, so with his sister Maud, whose coming marriage with a neighboring clergyman had absorbed most of the feminine interest of the household for weeks past. The costlier items of her *trousseau* were ruthlessly pruned away, leaving her, as she said, regretfully, "an outfit no better than a farmer's daughter's."

"And indeed, Maud," said her mother, a little hurt by this speech, "why should you claim anything better? Except in the accident of your being what is called well-born,

you are in no way superior to plenty of girls round about us. Your poor uncle's tenant at the Mill Farm gave his daughter a much grander wedding than we can give you now; but if you can ease your father and me by giving up these things, you won't mind, will you, darling?"

Then the pretty bride elect protested that to please her mother she would go and be married in a lilac print gown, and the mother, whose pangs had been many over the sacrifice of every item, brought forth some of the greatest treasures of her own wardrobe, supplementing the careful purchases of homelier things with gifts of lace that a duchess might have coveted, and sundry quaint jewels that twinkled and sparkled as though they were living creatures, and could tell their histories if they so willed.

Thus the love of these young people lightened Mrs. Beresford's cares, and took the sting out of many an uncongenial task.

But the bright sun of contentment that dispersed or gilded the clouds about her had the same happy effect on her husband only when she, its medium, was at hand.

At other times Mr. Beresford fell into the uncomfortable and unwise habit of ruminating over his troubles, among which their present pecuniary difficulty, the setting straight of which occupied his wife's healthy energies, seemed almost the least.

"Kingsbrooke" would never be his. It would never be Geoff's; and he little knew how entirely he had calculated on some day owning it until it was completely lost to him. Hugh's proud concealment of his blind child's existence he looked on in the light of a personal injury; and with all the wrong-headedness of an angry man, he blamed every person but the right one for his disappointment.

The right one being himself. For might not Hugh—his elder only by two or three years—might not Hugh have returned, and if childless have married again, and had more children? Or might he not, the entail ceasing with him, have chosen to sell the place, or divide it, or leave it to some other than this aggrieved kinsman?

In his neighbors' affairs Francis Beresford was clear-headed to a degree. There was not a man more liked, more generally consulted on matters public or domestic, more thoroughly trusted than himself for miles around, and yet in his own case he had made this stupid blunder; he had let himself drift into the idea of coming ownership till that idea had become part of his life; and when it was taken from him, he felt as much robbed as if a thief had walked off with his purse before his very eyes.

So the outcome of his self communings was that he announced his intention of going off to Liverpool early in the week following the receipt of the Australian letters.

"Anything is better than stopping about here waiting for a telegram from the captain. You don't know, my poor Joan, what these days have been to me. Every time I stir out somebody pities me. That old ass, Peter Burton, nearly put me in a rage this morning up at the brick-field. How? Why, he kept saying, 'And so Master Hugh is gone; and haven't you got the place now, Master Francis?' (You know the poor old fellow always talks as if we were boys still.) 'Well, I'm sorry for you, that I am; you'd ha' bin the right man in the right place, you would, after the many years you've bin a most the same as master!' Joan, I know it's abominable of me, but upon my honor it was all I could do to keep from swearing at him!"

"Poor Peter! If wishes could make you into the squire, Peter's wish would soon work the change! But, Frank dear, you are quite right; it will be much best for you to be ready to meet the poor boy, it's much the kindest thing you can do; and when you bring him safely back, why, you'll be so busy settling everything about him with Mr. Thornton, that you will never remember these trifles."

So soothing him by every possible little artifice, Mrs. Beresford pressed forward the arrangements for her husband's journey, and herself drove him to the station, four miles distant, on the following morning.

This was Tuesday, and not until the Thursday morning could Mrs. Beresford receive a letter from her husband, but on that morning came the expected missive, telling them that the *Sea King* had been passed by an American steamer, and might be looked for within four-and-twenty hours. Within a few minutes of this came a telegram dated 6 A. M. the same day, with the words, "Just off the landing-stage. *Sea King* in with the morning tide. Send to the station for the 9.30 train to-night."

After that the hours of the day lagged heavily, and excitement and expectancy were wrought to the highest pitch when the wheels of the dogcart were heard coming up the drive. But conceive the disappointment and almost dismay with which the groom's message was received:

"The train came in all right enough, ma'am, but master wasn't there nowhere. The guard said he was sure he hadn't got in at Liverpool Street, for there wasn't many passengers, and he knows he'd have noticed him. Which, of course, he would," finished James, who could not imagine the possibility of his master being unknown to any right-minded official between home and London. So there was nothing to be done by the household but to go to rest and wait the next day's trains.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the country the *Sea King* had arrived, and among its living freight had put ashore a tall, slim lad, whose refined, delicate features, the very image of his patient mother's, had instantly pointed him out to Francis Beresford as the charge he had come to seek.

At the first sound of his voice—"You are young Hugh Beresford, are you not?" he had said—the boy's color deepened, the long brown lashes fell over his dark, sightless eyes.

"You speak like—"

"Like—?"

"Like my father!" said the poor lad, with a sob, and clung with both hands to his cousin's arm.

Francis quivered as the boy hung on him. What would he have given to have been able to welcome this lonely boy with the warmth he longed for, to tell him he had something of his father's heart as well as his father's voice, to bid him cheer up, for there was a plenty of love and care waiting for him at the end of his day's journey.

But for the life of him he could not do it. His words of greeting came coldly and awkwardly from his lips, and he was glad to release his arm, and, leaving the lad in safe hands, to hurry after the removal of his few belongings.

As began, so went on the day. At the hotel breakfast he pressed food upon young Hugh, and put a few disjointed questions about the voyage. The time that had preceded it he dared not touch upon; for he had all a man's horror of tears, and had found out that safety from them only lay in silence as to the past.

"When we get home you will be all right," was the nearest approach to a comforting speech he found himself able to make, and even that was suggested by the decided impression, as the day wore on, that he himself should know no ease till he was safe into the same haven.

"What home am I going to?" asked the boy, half-timidly, and the deprecatory manner and slightly shrinking figure of the returning heir stung his cousin with a touch of self-reproach.

Here was he, known as the readiest friend and helper to every man, rich or poor, about him, letting an orphan, desolate altogether but for him, come into a strange land and ask what was to be his home!

"Why, you are coming to 'Elizabeth's,' of course," he answered, and at the kinder voice the boy drew nearer to him. "My wife will be looking for us by evening time. No, it is not evening yet; we've not reached London yet, and then there will be stations to change and forty miles further to travel." "And then," thought Mr. Beresford, and he frowned, with the old angry look of the last few days back on his face—"and then I shall take back the owner of the place he will never understand or value, and have to play henchman or steward to my young squire till I'm an old man. Ugh!"

He vented his final grumble out loud, and young Hugh asked him if he were very tired.

"I am," he said; "this thing shakes so. And the ship was dreadful. Oh, the noises and the men talking! I hated it; I never could sleep for the noises, you know, and—thinking. When I get home I shall be so tired I shall sleep for days and nights, I believe."

Indeed, on their arrival at London, the lad had just dropped off into an uneasy slumber, and in the hurry and confusion of a sudden awakening, amid the many strange sounds and jostlings of a crowded platform, contrived to lose his hold of his cousin's coat-sleeve, and be lost among the busy throng that pressed about him.

Then, discovering his absence in a few moments, Mr. Beresford had an anxious ten minutes' search for him, finding him at last, the very picture of silent terror, clinging tight to a lamp post, evidently fast losing what little nerve he possessed.

"Good heavens! how you frightened me," cried his cousin, almost angrily. "Here, keep tight hold of me now. Porter, a cab. Sit there till I get your things together."

But that was no easy matter. While seeking for the luggage the boy had got lost, and while hunting for the boy the luggage had vanished, more time was wasted in giving orders, and then, to crown all, when Liverpool Street Station was reached, their train had departed a quarter of an hour before.

Wisdom said, "Go to an hotel and go to sleep," but a strong desire possessed Francis Beresford to get home that night somehow, and when he found that the mail-train would be starting a couple of hours later, by that he determined they would go.

By that, after the most wearisome waiting he had ever known, they went, reaching Colford some half hour after midnight and finding, as might have been expected, no carriage, no vehicle of any kind to take them on to their destination.

"Why hadn't he telegraphed to his servant who was waiting there for the 9.30 train?" Why, because he never gave it a thought, taking it for granted that the man would wait for him. Now there was nothing to be done but to stand about till a fly could be got from the nearest inn, or—"But that wouldn't be possible, Hugh," cried Mr. Beresford, as the idea struck him. "You're too tired, are you not—or could you walk home?"

"Oh, yes!" was the eager answer. "Anything to get us there quickly. I can rest!—oh, how I can rest when we get there! Do let us walk!"

Without more ado, then, in this fashion, and at this strange hour, the young heir set off on his first journey over his own lands. A brilliant full moon made the path round the outskirts of the town, and through the field beyond, as easy traveling as the high-road itself, and Mr. Beresford repeated more than once that it was as light as day, forgetting how little difference that made to his hearer. "I've come over the fields," he said, when they had gone full half-an hour on their way, "because it saves us a long round; we have gone the best part of our way now. We are coming toward the brickfields. This is Kingsbrooke, Hugh!" The boy stopped short.

"This is Kingsbrooke, is it?" he said. "This land is mine, Cousin Francis!" bringing both hands together round his companion's arm with a tight, nervous grip. "You don't mind my coming home, do you? You are not angry with me for having the place instead of you, are you?"



Strange and unlucky question! The pathos of his voice touched no kindly responding chord in his hearer. All through that strange, silent walk a very demon of desire had been grappling with Francis Beresford's better self; a dozen voices seemed chanting in his ears, "Instead of you, instead of you!" And now the boy had, clinging to him, read his thoughts and put the self same question that had driven him half-wild through that long day.

There on the hillside was the white house, silvered along its broad front by the clear moonlight; away over the bridge was his own far smaller home, the modest dower-house of a bygone Beresford, which would have to be his to the end of his days; and here, all alone with him, trusting to his guidance for his every footstep—good heavens, what put that thought into his brain just then? All alone with him—all alone with him—was the one young life that stood between him and his desires.

"You are not angry, are you?" repeated the voice, half-sadly, and Mr. Beresford almost gasped for breath for words to deny the suggestion even, but the right words wouldn't come. Instead:

"Let us make haste," he almost whispered; "you must never speak like that, my boy; be quick. We are coming to the brook now. Hold me tight; hold me very tight; take hold of the rail with your other hand."

They were crossing the stream now, the broad band of living light that ran at the base of the brickfields between bare willow-branches on to the mill-dam half a mile away; crossing steadily and safely till midway on the planks. Then what was it? Did the boy slip or lose his footing? Francis Beresford could swear he never touched or loosened his hand; but in one awful moment young Hugh stumbled, and with a cry, "Oh, help me!" fell heavily into the swift flowing waters beneath.

#### CHAPTER III.—"A ROD FOR A FOOL'S BACK."

The stillness of death followed that one cry, and the stillness of death seemed to have seized on the one man who heard it. For full fifteen minutes, there stood the figure on the bridge, motionless as if a man of stone.

Was it the grip of some outward and visible demon held him there, that he never moved his eyes from the spot below whence the pale, upturned face had floated swiftly away? Had some very devil incarnate bound his hands, that never a muscle had stirred when the voice cried, "Help me?" What awful power, what strange paralysis, took possession of brain and heart, and clothed those minutes with a dream-like unreality that slowly faded when, as from a swoon, at last he roused.

Roused! Woke! What was it? Were the bells ringing for the boy's return (it was only St. Margaret's chimes from the distant town), and what were the voices around him. "It's yours—Kingsbrooke is yours." A very chorus seemed to fill the air about him.

Shivering, cowering like a dog let loose from the hand of a master who has beaten him, Francis Beresford unclasped his hands from the bridge-rail, and lifted his crouching form to meet the horrible wave of returning consciousness.

"Kingsbrooke is yours?" "Leave off, leave off!" he cried, stretching out two shaking arms as if to fence away a mortal foe, and an echo from the thick plantations on the hillside mocked him with his own words.

"Kingsbrooke is—" No, no, it was young Hugh's, the boy's—the boy's. "Where is he?" And again the cruel echo mocked him. "Where is he?" cried the air goblin. "Where is he?" he whispered with dry cold lips; and out of the wild turmoil of his breast came back the answer:

"He is dead."

And quite far away gibing voices went out chanting, "Kingsbrooke is yours. Yours, Francis Beresford, yours!"

"Never, never!" he almost shouted. "God help me, it shall never be mine!" and, wresting himself from the delusions his envious soul had cast about him, he tore like a madman up the white path to the only cottage in sight, and brought the inmates to come out and help him.

"Some one was drowning in the stream; for heaven's sake, come!"

But never a sound replied, for the place was as tenantless as the fields outside. Fulcher and all his brood of children might be there the very next day, but on that night they were taking their heavy slumbers at the further end of the village. The seconds of waiting were few, but they lagged like hours. Then the truth flashed upon him. Empty! And alone, hurrying, trembling from head to foot, he made his way back to the stream, and, kneed deep in water, waded on from willow to willow, holding on to the slender branches, peering into the deep pools, calling aloud: "Boy! Hugh! answer me! For pity's sake, speak!"

On through the mud and rushes till he neared the mill—past there it would be vain to search—groping vainly from post to post, the clear, tender moonlight lending its help in every nook and cranny; but all in vain! Once more St. Margaret's chimes rang out, and at every stroke Francis Beresford's heart lost hope. He knew now that in some deep spot lay the child he should have guarded—he knew that Kingsbrooke was verily his, but that he and peace had parted company for ever. Slowly he dragged himself up the bank, numb and despairing.

Into the oak plantation close by he plunged, terrifying with steps unusual a multitude of four-footed creatures who, on fun or food intent, were abroad this lovely night. Not till he reached a keeper's hut did he once stop to rest and think.

To think! How dared he think when every

thought was torment, every moment recalled filled him with horror, every moment to come would but cover him with dishonor!

Who would believe that it was all a chance? Nay, was it chance? And then, what power of earth or hell had kept him back, when a spring, an outstretched arm, would have saved the child?

Over and over that miserable, self-condemning track his pitiless conscience dragged him, bringing him ever face to face with the accusation that burnt into his soul: "You wished him dead!"

He had wished him dead, though till this moment the unholy thought had never shaped itself in honest words.

"Good God!" he muttered, and fell a-trembling like the brown leaves over his head.

And this loved husband, this trusted friend, this man of gentle birth, and, save in this one great trial, of gentle heart, worthy the love he owned, sat through the solitude of the now darkening wood with that one thought driving him close on to madness.

The sin he had fostered had taken shape, and hunted him down into an abyss of humiliation and misery unutterable.

Its stupor was closing round him like a pall when, close by, the bass whirr-r of a peasant's flight startled him, and opening his heavy eyes once more upon the outer life, lo! the pink flush of dawn was stealing through the trees, another day was waiting for the world.

Then, cramped from this wretched vigil, chilled to the very bone, Mr. Beresford rose up and turned his face homeward.

Through the golden bracken and thick underwood, all laden with the heavy night dew, heedless of bough and branch and thorns, of all that lay between him and home; on he went, clearing the wood, and standing in the open field at last. For a moment he paused. There yonder was the roof that covered his best beloved, and a rush of passionate emotion half-choked him.

"God bless them! God help me!" he groaned, and even as he uttered the words, help came.

"Mr. Beresford, sir!"

It was old Peter Burton shouting to him, beckoning him towards his cottage, a little bit of a dwelling place just on the outskirts of the wood.

Mr. Beresford stared, scarcely comprehending the call, and would have gone his own way, but Peter cried again, moving towards his doorway as he did so.

"Come along, sir! Come here, Master Francis; make haste, sir!"

Bright firelight was gleaming through the cottage window; the door stood wide open; in the inner room, Peter, anxious of face, clad in his clay-bespattered garments, stooped over something that lay upon his own poor bed.

Over something, some one. Oh, was the sight a cruel mockery, was this a dream, or had God, as by a miracle, given him back his life, his home?

For there, sleeping as peacefully as a baby, two hands that had not yet lost the dimpled grace of childhood clasped above his head, lay young Hugh Beresford, and at the sight, his kinsman fell upon his knees, speechless with joy.

As on a deaf man's ear fell Peter's low-toned explanations, and it was some minutes before he could make clear to his hearer his own share of the night's work.

"They bricks," he was saying, for the third time, when Mr. Beresford first noticed he was speaking. "Was wonderful awkward. I'd counted on finishin' off the batch fore supper-time, and gittin' to my bed like a Christian man; but two of my men got off drinkin' in the day, and that hindered me, and the one I reckoned on leavin' just to put in the last two lots o' coals, he never turned up at the time he ought, and so I had to finish up my own self. And I grumbled over it. I don't wish to conceal nothin', and that's the truth; grumble I did. But there, the Almighty knows what we're arter a deal better than we know ourselves, and it wasn't wholly to please his own self, you may depend on it, that Fulcher kept out o' the way! Well, sir, when I was just crawlin' up home somewhere in the small hours, which I did, takin' a short cut through the trees and out by the water, what should I hear but the water-fowl bustlin' about. 'Snarers!' thinks I. 'Poachers!' says I, to myself; 'but you ain't a-goin' to have it all to yourself, my man, whoever you are!' So I just crept down in the shades o' them big polled ash, and when I got by the water edge what should I see but little master there, nodding his head at the sleeping boy, 'drifted right up by that old willow that leans out over the stream, with his arms spread out and his white face bobbin' up and down for all the world like one of Miss Olive's white ducks she's so fond of!"

"And then, Peter?"

"Why, then, you may depend on it, sir, I out with him pretty quick; and I do believe I dragged him heels up'ards right here to my own door. Carry him I couldn't—he's a great grown lad for all he's got a girl's face—an' I stripped him and rolled him up in the thickest blanket I'd got, and I made a fire fit to roast a bullock, and rubbed and turned him about, till presently he give a sigh like and opened his poor eyes, and I knew he was all right."

"And did he speak?"

"He just said, 'Never mind, Cousin Francis; it was all my own fault not holding to you tight.' And he said that over, sort of sleeping like, and then he went right off as sound as a bell, and so he's kept ever since. I durstn't leave him for fear he should wake and find himself alone; and what's more, though I never meant to, what should I do but go right off as sound as him, and never open my stupid old eyes till half an hour ago! I was just rubbin' myself awake out by the

door, when I see you come up from the wood, and I thought in a minute what a night you'd had of it; for, of course, after he spoke, I knew well enough who he was. Why, Master Francis, I do believe you've been in the water yourself!" eying the wet, mud-covered clothes of his hearer.

"Water!" cried Mr. Beresford, aloud. "I've been through a very furnace of trouble, Peter. I—"

"Cousin!"

The boy was waking, raising himself up, stretching his hands forth, his helplessness entreating some one's care and pity. In a moment he was gathered up in strong arms, close to the heart which vowed henceforth to be his friend, his very slave through life.

Long years of patient care and almost womanly tenderness have been the fruit of that night's terrors. No more longing after Kingsbrooke now, except to make it worthy of its master, and the master fitted for his place.

His every deed and word testify to the truth of his repentance, and the rest lies between him and One who knows all secrets. *Requiescat!*

#### TAMMANY'S WATERLOO.

FRIDAY, December 10th, witnessed a most complete revolution in offices in New York City, and Tammany Hall sustained a signal defeat. The question of the reappointment of John Kelly as Comptroller had exercised all circles for many days. When the Aldermen met in their Chamber to act upon the nominations of Mayor Cooper, not only all the available space of the hall, but the corridors and steps of the City Hall, were densely packed with politicians and others. The Republican Aldermen uniting with the Irving Hall Democrats and four Tammany Aldermen, put out of office Comptroller John Kelly, John Wheeler, President of the Tax Department; Park Commissioner James F. Wenman, Excise Commissioners George W. Morton and Philip Merkle, and Police Justices Patrick G. Duffy and F. Sherman Smith; and by votes varying from 17 to 4 to 13 to 8 confirmed Mayor Cooper's nominations of Allan Campbell, an Irving Hall Democrat, for Comptroller; Hubert G. Thompson, an Irving Hall Democrat, for Commissioner of Public Works; William C. Whitney, an Irving Hall Democrat, for Corporation Counsel; Maurice J. Power, an Irving Hall Democrat, for Police Justice; William P. Mitchell, an Irving Hall Democrat, for Excise Commissioner; John D. Lawson, a Republican, for President of the Department of Taxes and Assessments; Salem H. Wales, a Republican, for Park Commissioner; William Lalmeier, a Republican, for Duck Commissioner; Solon B. Smith and Hugh Gardner for Police Justices, and Morris Friedman for Excise Commissioner.

There was intense excitement during the session. At its close the new officers were sworn in by Mayor Cooper, and in the evening he was honored by a serenade at his residence.

#### PICTORIAL SPIRIT OF THE FOREIGN ILLUSTRATED PRESS.

##### Rev. T. Pelham Dale, in Holloway Jail.

The bitterness of language with which the supporters and opponents of Ritualism contend against each other would be amusing, were it not saddening to reflect how much valuable mental energy is expended on both sides in a manner which all impartial observers cannot but regard as very much worse than utterly useless. The imprisonment of the Rev. T. Pelham Dale has given a fresh impetus to the torrents of fierce denunciation, and equally fierce declamation against "oppression"—the one party being unable to see anything in Mr. Dale but an obstinate and defiant rebel against the law, and the other regarding him in the light of a Christian martyr. Mr. Dale, who is the eldest son of the late Dean Dale, of Rochester, better known as Canon of St. Paul's, was educated at Cambridge, and after holding a curacy at Camberwell for some years, became rector of St. Vedast's, in 1848. At that time the church, like so many others in London city, was almost without a congregation, but since 1873, when the much complained-of changes in the ritual were first adopted, it has been greatly crowded. Mr. Dale, as is well known, has persistently disregarded the judgments, monitions, and inhibitions which have been issued against him, and he has now declared his full intention to end his days in prison rather than yield obedience to a State-made judge. His lodgings in Holloway Jail, as will be seen from our engraving, are small, but by no means uncomfortable, nor are the regulations very severe. He has to rise at six, go to bed at nine; his diet is in no way restricted, and he spends the day as he thinks proper—his wife, son and daughters being allowed to visit him daily, while occasionally other friends are also admitted.

##### Expulsion of M. Baudry d'Asson from the French Chamber.

At the opening of the Chamber of Deputies M. Baudry d'Asson was temporarily excluded from his seat for unpatriotic language previously spoken. According to the order, he was not to re-enter the Chamber under fourteen days, but on November 11th, he took his seat as if there was no prohibition upon him. Every one expected that a very grave scene was about to be enacted. He maintained an attitude of determination, and kept his seat with his arms crossed. Refusing to obey M. Gambetta's order, the sitting was suspended, the members of the Majority leaving and those of the Right remaining. Continuing obstinate, the Bureau of the Chamber ordered his expulsion, and the guard being called in, he was carried from the Chamber by five soldiers, and confined in an adjoining room.

##### A Convention of French Barbers.

The Hair Dressers' Corporation held a meeting and had a competition for prizes recently at the Summer Circus on the Champs Elysees, at which seventy hair-dressers contended for the gold and silver medals awarded by the corporation. Each hair-dresser brought his model—that is to say, the young woman the manipulation of whose abundant tresses was to display his skill. Very few of the seventy models had dark hair, as hair locks are supposed to bring out better the delicate details of the coiffure, while red hair is even more advantageous. The work was skillfully and swiftly done, to the great satisfaction of fully 3,000 spectators. The first prize for Paris was carried off by M. Auguste Olivier, but it was a Belgian, M. Fontaine, who gained the award for the best historical coiffure.

##### The Land League Agitation in Ireland.

Lough Mask Farm, which is likely to become a famous place in the history of Ireland, is situated in the County of Mayo, almost in the centre of the district known as the "nursery of the Land League," the first meeting of that organization having been held at Balla, a village near Castlebar. Captain Boycott, besides managing his own farm, has been for some years agent to Lord Erne, who, it is said, bears an excellent reputation as a landlord. The attempt to serve a number of ejectments in September last led the tenants to appeal to Lord Erne to

dismiss him. His lordship refused, and from that day Captain Boycott became a marked man. No laborer dared to work for him, no tradesman to serve him with goods. He was isolated by order of the Land Leaguers, and was compelled to accept the services of constabulary to protect the lives of himself and family. His case is a typical one, and for some time attracted little attention, although he and his wife and daughters were left to get in the crops as best they could. Mr. Manning's letter to the *Daily Express*, under the signature of "Combination," first started the idea of going to Captain Boycott's assistance. He was soon flooded with correspondence offering every kind of co-operation, and one person alone promised to get together 30,000 volunteers. Mr. Forster, however, at once vetoed the project of an armed invasion, at the same time offering to afford military protection to whatever number of men were required for the bona fide purpose of saving the crops. It was accordingly decided to pick out some fifty or sixty from the great number of Cavan and Monaghan men who were anxious to go, and these, under the leadership of Mr. Manning and Captain Somerset Maxwell, were forwarded. They were escorted by double files of troops from Claremorris to Ballinrobe. While the volunteer farm-hands were at work, Captain Boycott's house was fully guarded by the constabulary and the militia.

#### AT HOME AND ABROAD.

—THE State Senate Chamber at Albany is to be lighted by electricity.

—MARSHFIELD, Mo., has been half destroyed, for the second time in a year, by a cyclone.

—TWENTY or thirty people have been killed in Mexico by the remnant of Victoria's band.

—THE census from all the counties in Georgia, excepting three, shows the increase of population since 1875 to be 127,557.

—THE Municipality of Paris has rejected the petition of Henri Rochefort for a site for a monument to deceased Communists.

—A COMPANY has been formed at Bordeaux, France, for the operation of a steamship line between that port and New York.

—THE Democrats of the United States Senate have decided to drop several of the special investigating committees appointed at a previous session.

—THE initial steps have been taken for the erection in Philadelphia of one of the finest Conservatories of Music in the Union. It will be located on Chestnut Street.

—SEVERAL thousand pilgrims returning from Mecca are detained at Bagdad, owing to the Kurds having attacked the last three caravans and killed and wounded over 500 pilgrims.

—It is reported semi-officially that an attempt will be made by the European Powers to prevent a war between Greece and Turkey. The feeling of mutual hostility between Turkey and Persia is said to be spreading.

—THERE is some excitement in Spain over the passage in President Hayes's Message referring to the aggressions of cruisers on American vessels in Cuban waters. The press of Madrid are making bitter comments upon it.

—ON the vote for Representatives in Congress, the Republicans of California have 612 majority over the Democrats. The highest candidate for Elector on the Democratic ticket has 94 majority over the highest on the Republican ticket.

—CONTRACTS are already let for the extension of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad from Denison, via Fort Worth, Austin and San Antonio, to Laredo on the Mexican frontier, in all about 600 miles, to be completed during the ensuing year.

—A CORRESPONDENT at Constantinople reports that the relations of the Porte with Persia are very strained, and feelings of mutual hostility are rapidly spreading to the public on account of the Sultan's taking no steps to arrest the Kurdish rebellion.

—COMMISSIONER L. B. DUC estimates the total value of the broadstuffs, animals and animal matter produced in 1880, at \$2,000,000,000; the agricultural exports, at \$166,400,428; broadstuffs, \$288,050,201, and cotton, \$221,517,323. Total exports of all kinds, \$823,946,353.

—THE house of refuge on the top of Mount St. Gothard, founded in the fourteenth century, will be permanently closed two years hence. The opening of the tunnel will render it useless, as not even beggars will then cross the mountain on foot. At present the hospice affords shelter, food and a bed to 20,000 people yearly, and is supported by public and private charity. The ride through the tunnel will cost only twenty cents.

—IN an address in this city the other day, Governor St. John of Kansas said that the present prohibitory liquor constitutional amendment first passed the Senate unanimously, and was sent to the House, where it was expected, it would be submitted to the people. The anti-temperance element fought it hard, but when it was forced to a vote it lacked only one of the necessary two-thirds vote. Several votes were taken with the same result, and everything indicated that it would be lost. In the midst of the excitement a woman entered the House and appealed to her husband, a Democratic member, in the name of God to change his vote, and he changed it.

—AN English patent has just been granted on the double-web perfecting press, invented by Joseph L. Firm, superintendent of the press-rooms of this establishment. While an ordinary perfecting press, using four plates for each side, will throw off from 10,000 to 15,000 copies per hour, the Firm press, with the same number of plates, will supply 30,000 copies, printed on both sides. "In working-off newspapers, this press also effects a saving of at least 50 percent in stereotyping, as it requires only two forms and four impression cylinders. In some of the large daily newspaper offices, from thirty-two to sixty-four plates are required to work off the edition, but on the Firm double-web press used, sixteen plates would be found sufficient to perform double the work of the ordinary press.

—PROFESSOR HIND, who was an official of the Halifax Fishery Commission, and some months ago made charges that the statistics used in the British case were false, has had printed in pamphlet form a letter addressed to the Governor-General of Canada, in which he makes charges of a broader character. He says that not only were the statistics presented to the Commission false, but that the official blue-books of Canada bearing on the fish trade with the United States were systematically falsified for a series of years to produce results that would serve the purpose in view. Exports of the United States were made to appear much less than they really were, for the purpose of making out that the Province benefited little by the free admission of fish into the States. Fictitious items of exports to foreign countries were introduced to make it appear that the Provinces were less dependent than they really were on the American market. Other fictitious items were inserted to make it appear that the Americans found a large market for fish in the Provinces. It is alleged that these falsifications began soon after the Treaty of Washington was made.





THE SPIRIT OF BENEVOLENCE AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE CASE OF THE AGED IN THE NINETEENTH





THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.—A CHRISTMAS VISITATION TO AN OLD LADIES' HOME.—SEE PAGE 271.



## IN SNOW-TIME.

How should I choose to walk the world with thee,  
Mine own beloved? When green grass is stirred  
By Summer breezes, and each leafy tree  
Shelters the nest of many a singing bird?  
In time of roses, when the earth doth lie  
Dressed in a garment of midsummer hues,  
Beneath a canopy of sapphire sky,  
Lulled by a soft wind's song? Or should I choose  
To walk with thee along a wintry road,  
Through flowerless fields, thick-sown with frosty  
rime,  
Beside an ice-bound stream, whose waters flowed  
In voiceless music all the Summer-time?  
In Winter dreariness, or Summer glee,  
How should I choose to walk the world with thee?

The time of roses is the time of love.  
Ah, my dear heart! but Winter fires are bright,  
And in the lack of sunshine from above  
We tend more carefully Love's sacred light.  
The path among the roses lieth soft;  
Sun-kissed and radiant under youthful feet;  
But on a wintry way true hands more oft  
Do meet and cling in pressure close and sweet.  
There is more need of Love's supporting arm  
Along Life's slippery pathway in its frost,  
There is more need for Love to wrap us warm,  
Against Life's cold, when Summer flowers are lost,  
Let others share thy life's glad Summer glow,  
But let me walk beside thee in its snow!

## THE BLACK ROBE.

BY WILKIE COLLINS.

## BOOK THE SECOND.

## CHAPTER II.—THE QUESTION OF MARRIAGE.

AS Stella answered Lady Loring, she was smartly tapped on the shoulder by an eager guest with a fan.

The guest was a very little woman, with twinkling eyes and a perpetual smile. Nature, corrected by powder and paint, was liberally displayed in her arms, her bosom, and the upper part of her back. Such clothes as she wore, defective perhaps in quantity, were in quality absolutely perfect. More adorable color, shape and workmanship never appeared, even in a milliner's picture-book. Her light hair was dressed with a fringe and ringlets, on the pattern which the portraits of the time of Charles the Second have made familiar to us. There was nothing exactly young or exactly old about her, except her voice, which betrayed a faint hoarseness, attributable possibly to exhaustion, produced by untold years of incessant talking. It might be added that she was as active as a squirrel, and as playful as a kitten. But the lady must be treated with a certain forbearance of tone, for this good reason—she was Stella's mother.

Stella turned quickly at the tap of the fan. "Mamma!" she exclaimed, "how you startle me!"

"My dear child," said Mrs. Eyrecourt, "you are constitutionally indolent, and you want startling. Go into the next room directly; Mr. Romaine is looking for you."

Stella drew back a step and eyed her mother in blank surprise. "Is it possible that you know him?" she asked.

"Mr. Romaine doesn't go into society, or we should have met long since," Mrs. Eyrecourt replied. "He is a striking person—and I noticed him when he shook hands with you. That was quite enough for me. I have just introduced myself to him as your mother. He was a little stately and stiff, but most charming when he knew who I was. I volunteered to find you. He was quite astonished. I think he took me for your elder sister. Not the least like each other—are we, Lady Loring? She takes after her poor, dear father. He was constitutionally indolent. My sweet child, rouse yourself. You have drawn a prize in the great lottery at last. If ever a man was in love, Mr. Romaine is that man. I am a physiognomist, Lady Loring, and I see the passions in the face. Oh, Stella, what a property. Vange Abbey. I once drove that way when I was visiting in the neighborhood. Superb. And another fortune (eight thousand a year and a villa at Highgate) since the death of his aunt. And my daughter may be mistress of this, if she only plays her cards properly. What a compensation, after all that we suffered through that monster, Winterfield!"

"Mamma! Pray don't—"  
"Stella I will not be interrupted when I am speaking to you for your own good. I don't know a more provoking person, Lady Loring, than my daughter—on certain occasions. And yet I love her. I would go through fire and water for my beautiful child. Only last week I was at a wedding, and I thought of Stella. The church crammed to the doors. A hundred at the wedding-breakfast. The bride's lace—there! no language can describe it. Ten bridesmaids in blue and silver. Reminded me of the ten virgins. Only the proportion of foolish ones, this time, was certainly more than five. However, they looked well. The archbishop proposed the health of the bride and bridegroom. So sweetly pathetic. Some of us cried. I thought of my daughter. Oh, if I could live to see Stella the central attraction, so to speak, of such a wedding as that! Only I would have twelve bridesmaids at least, and beat the blue and silver with green and gold. Trying to the complexion, you will say. But there are artificial improvements. At least I am told so. What a house this would be—a broad hint, isn't it; dear Lady Loring?—what a house for a wedding, with the drawing-room to assemble in, and the picture-gallery for the breakfast. I know the archbishop, my darling, he shall marry you. Why don't you go into the next room? Ah, that constitutional indolence. If you only had my energy, as I used to say to your poor father. Will you go? Yes, dear Lady Loring, I should like a glass of champagne and another of those delicious chicken sandwiches. If you don't go, Stella, I

shall forget every consideration of propriety, and, big as you are, I shall push you out."

Stella yielded to necessity. "Keep her quiet, if you can," she whispered to Lady Loring, in the moment of silence that followed. Even Mrs. Eyrecourt was not able to talk while she was drinking champagne.

In the next room Stella found Romaine. He looked careworn and irritable, but brightened directly when she approached him.

"My mother has been speaking to you," she said. "I am afraid—"

He stopped her there.

"She is your mother," he interposed, kindly.

"Don't think that I am ungrateful enough to forget that."

She took his arm, and looked at him with all her heart in her eyes.

"Come into a quieter room," she whispered. Romaine led her away. Neither of them noticed Penrose as they left the room.

He had not moved since Stella had spoken to him. There he remained in his corner, absorbed in thought—and not in happy thought, as his face would have plainly betrayed to any one who had cared to look at him. His eyes sadly followed the retiring figures of Stella and Romaine. The color rose on his haggard face. Like most men who are accustomed to live alone, he had the habit, when he was strongly excited, of speaking to himself. "No," he said, as the acknowledged lovers disappeared through the door, "it is an insult to ask me to do it!" He turned the other way, escaped Lady Loring's notice in the reception-room, and left the house.

Romaine and Stella passed through the card-room and the chess-room, turned into a corridor, and entered the conservatory.

For the first time the place was a solitude. The air of a newly-invented dance, faintly audible through the open windows of the ball-room above, had proved an irresistible temptation. Those who knew the dance were eager to exhibit themselves. Those who had only heard of it were equally anxious to look on and learn. Even towards the latter end of the nineteenth century, the youths and maidens of Society can still be in earnest—when the object in view is a new dance.

What would Major Hynd have said if he had seen Romaine turn into one of the recesses of the conservatory, in which there was a seat which just held two? But the major had forgotten his years and his family; and he, too, was one of the spectators in the ball-room.

"I wonder," said Stella, "whether you know how I feel those kind words of yours, when you spoke of my mother. Shall I tell you?"

She put her arm round his neck and kissed him. He was a man new to love, in the nobler sense of the word. The exquisite softness in the touch of her lips, the delicious fragrance of her breath, intoxicated him. Again and again he returned the kiss. She drew back; she recovered her self-possession with a suddenness and a certainty incomprehensible to a man. From the depths of tenderness she passed to the shallows of frivolity. In her own defense she was almost as superficial as her mother, in less than a moment.

"What would Mr. Penrose say if he saw you?" she whispered.

"Why do you speak of Penrose? Have you seen him to-night?"

"Yes—looking sadly out of his element, poor man. I did my best to set him at his ease—because I know you like him."

"Dear Stella!"

"No, not again! I am speaking seriously, now. Mr. Penrose looked at me with a strange kind of interest—I can't describe it. Have you taken him into our confidence?"

"He is so devoted—he has such a true interest in me," said Romaine—"I really felt ashamed to treat him like a stranger. On our journey to London, I did own that it was your charming letter which had decided me on returning. I did say, 'I must tell her myself how well she has understood me, and how deeply I feel her kindness.' Penrose took my hand in his gentle, considerate way. 'I understand you, too,' he said, and that was all that passed between us."

"Nothing more, since that time?"

"Nothing."

"Not a word of what we said to each other, when we were alone last week in the picture-gallery?"

"Not a word. I am self-tormentor enough to distrust myself, even now. God knows, I have concealed nothing from you, and yet—Am I not selfishly thinking of my own happiness, Stella, when I ought to be thinking only of you? You know, my angel, with what a life you must associate yourself if you marry me. Are you really sure that you have love enough and courage enough to be my wife?"

She rested her head caressingly on his shoulder, and looked up at him with her charming smile.

"How many times must I say it," she asked, "before you will believe me? Once more—I have love enough and courage enough to be your wife; and I knew it, Lewis, the first time I saw you! Will that confession satisfy your scruples? And will you promise never again to doubt yourself or me?"

Romaine promised and sealed the promise—unresisted this time—with a kiss. "When are we to be married?" he whispered.

She lifted her head from his shoulder with a sigh. "If I am to answer you honestly," she replied, "I must speak of my mother before I speak of myself."

Romaine submitted to the duties of his new position as well as he understood them.

"Do you mean that you have told your mother of our engagement?" he said. "In that case, is it my duty or yours—I am very ignorant in these matters—to consult her wishes? My own idea is, that I ought to ask her if she approves of me as her son-in-law, and that you might then speak to her of the marriage."

Stella thought of Romaine's tastes, all in favor of modest retirement, and of her mother's tastes, all in favor of ostentation and display. She frankly owned the result produced in her own mind.

"I am afraid to consult my mother about our marriage," she said.

Romaine looked astonished. "Do you think Mrs. Eyrecourt will disapprove of it?" he asked.

Stella was equally astonished on her side. "Disapprove of it?" she repeated. "I know for certain that my mother will be delighted."

"Then where is the difficulty?"

There was but one way of definitely answering that question. Stella boldly described her mother's idea of a wedding—including the archbishop, the twelve bridesmaids in green and gold, and the hundred guests at breakfast in Lord Loring's picture gallery. Romaine's consternation literally deprived him, for the moment, of the power of speech. To say that he looked at Stella as a prisoner in "the condemned cell" might have looked at the sheriff, announcing the morning of his execution, would be to do injustice to the prisoner. He receives his shock without flinching; and, in proof of his composure, celebrates his wedding with the galleys by a breakfast which he will not live to digest.

"If you think as your mother does," Romaine began, as soon as he had recovered his self-possession, "no opinion of mine shall stand in the way—"  
He could get no further. His vivid imagination saw the archbishop and the bridesmaids, heard the hundred guests and their dreadful speeches; his voice faltered, in spite of himself.

Stella eagerly relieved him. "My darling, I don't think as my mother does," she interposed tenderly. "I am sorry to say, we have very few sympathies in common. Marriages, as I think, ought to be celebrated as privately as possible—the near and dear relations present, and no one else. If there must be rejoicings and banquets, and hundreds of invitations, let them come when the wedded pair are at home after the honeymoon, beginning life in earnest. These are odd ideas for a woman to have—but they are my ideas, for all that."

Romaine's face brightened. "How few women possess your fine sense and your delicacy of feeling!" he exclaimed. "Surely your mother must give way when she hears we are both of one mind about our marriage?"

Stella knew her mother too well to share the opinion thus expressed. Mrs. Eyrecourt's capacity for holding to her own little ideas and for persisting (where her social interests were concerned) in trying to insinuate those ideas into the minds of other persons, was a capacity which no resistance, short of absolute brutality, could overcome. She was perfectly capable of worrying Romaine (as well as her daughter) to the utmost limits of human endurance. In the firm conviction that she was bound to convert all heretics of their way of thinking to the orthodox view in the matter of weddings. Putting this view of the case with all possible delicacy, in speaking of her mother, Stella expressed herself plainly enough, nevertheless, to enlighten Romaine.

He made another suggestion. "Can we marry privately?" he said, "and tell Mrs. Eyrecourt of it afterwards?"

This essentially masculine solution of the difficulty was at once rejected. Stella was too good a daughter to suffer her mother to be treated with even the appearance of disrespect.

"Oh," she said, "think how mortified and distressed my mother would be! She must be present at my marriage."

An idea of a compromise occurred to Romaine.

"What do you say," he proposed, "to arranging for the marriage privately, and then telling Mrs. Eyrecourt only a day or two beforehand, when it would be too late to send out invitations? If your mother would be disappointed—"

"She would be angry," Stella interposed.

"Very well, lay all the blame on me. Besides, there might be two other persons present, whom I am sure Mrs. Eyrecourt is always glad to meet. You don't object to Lord and Lady Loring?"

"Object? I wouldn't be without them at my wedding for the whole world."

"Any one else, Stella?"

"Any one, Lewis, whom you like."

"Then I say, no one else. My own love! When may it be? My lawyers can get the settlements ready in a fortnight, or less. Will you say in a fortnight?"

His arm was round her waist; his lips were touching her lovely neck. She was not a woman to take refuge in the commonplace coquetties of the sex.

"Yes," she said, softly, "if you wish it." She rose and withdrew herself from him. "For my sake, we must not be here together any longer, Lewis." As she spoke, the music in the ballroom ceased. Stella ran out of the conservatory.

The first person she encountered, on returning to the reception-room, was Father Benwell.

## CHAPTER III.—THE END OF THE BALL.

THE priest's long journey did not appear to have fatigued him. He was as cheerful and as polite as ever, and so paternally attentive to Stella that it was quite impossible for her to pass him with a formal bow.

"I have come all the way from Devonshire," he said. "The train has been behind time, as usual, and I am one of the late arrivals in consequence. I miss some familiar faces at this delightful party. Mr. Romaine, for instance. Perhaps he is not one of the guests?"

"Oh, yes."

"Has he gone away?"

"Not that I know of."

The tone of her replies warned Father Benwell to let Romaine be. He tried another name.

"And Arthur Penrose?" he inquired next.

"I think Mr. Penrose has left us."

As she answered she looked towards Lady Loring. The hostess was the centre of a circle of ladies and gentlemen. Before she was at liberty, Father Benwell might take his departure. Stella resolved to make the attempt for herself which she had asked Lady Loring to make for her. It was better to try and be defeated than not to try at all.

"I asked Mr. Penrose what part of Devonshire you were visiting," she resumed, assuming her more gracious manner. "I know something myself of the north coast, especially the neighborhood of Clovelly."

Not the faintest change passed over the priest's face; his fatherly smile had never been in a better state of preservation.

"Isn't it a charming place?" he said, with enthusiasm. "Clovelly is the most remarkable and most beautiful village in England. I have so enjoyed my little holiday—excursions by sea and excursions by land—do you know I feel quite young again?"

He lifted his eyebrows playfully and rubbed his plump hands one over the other with an air of an intolerably innocent air of enjoyment that Stella positively hated him. She felt her capacity for self-restraint failing her. Under the influence of strong emotion, her thoughts lost their customary discipline. In attempting to fathom Father Benwell, she was conscious of having undertaken a task which required more pliable moral qualities than she possessed. To her own unutterable annoyance she was at a loss what to say next. At that critical moment her mother appeared—eager for news of the conquest of Romaine.

"My dear child, how pale you look!" said Mrs. Eyrecourt. "Come with me, directly; you must have a glass of wine."

This dexterous device for entrapping Stella into a private conversation failed.

"Not now, mamma, thank you," she said.

Father Benwell, on the point of discreetly withdrawing, stopped, and looked at Mrs. Eyrecourt with an appearance of respectful interest. "Your mother?" he said to Stella, "I should feel honored if you will introduce me."

Having (not very willingly) performed the ceremony of presentation, Stella drew back a little. She had no desire to take any part in the conversation that might follow—but she had her own reasons for waiting near enough to hear it.

In the meanwhile, Mrs. Eyrecourt turned on her inexhaustible flow of small talk, with her customary facility. No distinction of persons troubled her; no convictions of any sort stood in her way. She was equally ready (provided she met him in good society) to make herself agreeable to a Puritan or a Papist.

"Delighted to make your acquaintance, Father Benwell. Surely, I met you at that delightful evening at the duke's? I mean when we welcomed the cardinal back from Rome. Dear old man—if one may speak so familiarly of a prince of the Church—how charmingly he bears his new honors. Such patriarchal simplicity, as every one remarked. Have you seen him lately?"

The idea of the Order to which he belonged feeling any special interest in a cardinal (except when they made him of some use to them), privately amused Father Benwell. "How wise the Church was," he thought, "in inventing a spiritual aristocracy. Even this fool of a woman is impressed by it." His spoken reply was true to his assumed character as one of the inferior clergy. "Poor priests, like me, madam, see but little of princes of the Church in the houses of dukes." Saying this with the most becoming humility, he turned the talk in a more productive direction, before Mrs. Eyrecourt could proceed with her recollections of "the evening at the duke's."

"Your charming daughter and I have been talking about Clovelly," he continued. "I have just been spending a little holiday in that delightful place. It was a surprise to me, Mrs. Eyrecourt, to see so many really beautiful country seats in the neighborhood. I was particularly struck—you know it, of course?—by Beaupark House."

Mrs. Eyrecourt's little twinkling eyes suddenly became still and steady. It was only for a moment. But even that trifling change boded ill for the purpose which the priest had in view.

Having the opportunity of turning Stella's mother into a valuable source of information actually placed in his hands, Father Benwell reasoned with himself, as he had reasoned at Miss Notman's tea-table. A frivolous person was a person easily persuaded to gossip, and not likely to be reticent in keeping secrets. In drawing this conclusion, the reverend Father was justified by every wise man's experience of human nature, but he forgot to make allowance for the modifying influence of circumstances. Even the wits of a fool can be quickened by contact with the world. For many years Mrs. Eyrecourt had held her place in Society, acting under an intensely selfish sense of her own interests, fortified by those cunning instincts which grow best in a barren intellect. Perfectly unworthy of being trusted with secrets which only concerned other people, this frivolous creature could be the unassailable guardian of secrets which concerned herself. The instant the priest referred indirectly to Winterfield, by speaking of Beaupark House, her instincts warned her, as if in words: "Be careful for Stella's sake!"

"Oh, yes!" said Mrs. Eyrecourt. "I know Beaupark House; but—May I make a confession?" she added, with her sweetest smile.

Father Benwell caught her tone with his customary tact. "A confession at a ball is a novelty, even in my experience," he answered, with his sweetest smile.

"How good of you to encourage me!" proceeded Mrs. Eyrecourt. "No, thank you; I



don't want to sit down. My confession won't take long, and I really must give that poor pale daughter of mine a glass of wine. A student of human nature like you—they say all priests are students of human nature—accustomed, of course, to be consulted in difficulties, and to hear real confessions, must know that we poor women are sadly subject to whims and caprices. We can't resist them as men do; and the dear, good men generally make allowances for us. Well, do you know, that place of Mr. Winterfield's is one of my caprices. Oh, dear, I speak carelessly; I ought to have said, the place represents one of my caprices. In short, Father Benwell, Beaupark House is perfectly odious to me, and I think I have the most over-rated place in the world. I haven't the least reason to give, but so it is. Excessively foolish of me. It's like hysterics. I can't help it. I'm sure you will forgive me. There isn't a place on the habitable globe that I am not ready to feel interested in, except detestable Devonshire. I am so sorry you went there. The next time you have a holiday, take my advice. Try the Continent."

"I should like it of all things," said Father Benwell, "only I don't speak French. Allow me to get Miss Eyecourt a glass of wine."

He spoke with the most perfect temper and tranquillity. Having paid his little attention to Stella, and having relieved her of the empty glass, he took his leave, with a parting request thoroughly characteristic of the man.

"Are you staying in town, Mrs. Eyecourt?" he asked.

"Oh, of course, at the height of the season!"

"May I have the honor of calling on you, and talking a little more about the Continent?"

If he had said it in so many words, he could scarcely have informed Mrs. Eyecourt more plainly that he thoroughly understood her, and that he meant to try again. Strong in the worldly training of half a lifetime, she at once informed him of her address, with the complimentary phrases proper to the occasion. "Five o'clock tea on Wednesdays, Father Benwell. Don't forget!"

The moment he was gone, she drew her daughter into a quiet corner.

"Don't be frightened, Stella. That sly old person has some interest in trying to find out about Winterfield. Do you know why?"

"Indeed I don't, mamma. I hate him!"

"Oh, hush, hush! Hate him as much as you like, but always be civil to him. Tell me, have you been in the conservatory with Romney?"

"Yes."

"All going on well?"

"Yes."

"My sweet child! Dear, dear me, the wine has done you no good; you're as pale as ever. Is it that priest? Oh, pooh, pooh! Leave Father Benwell to me."

(To be continued.)

#### A NINETEENTH CENTURY CHRISTMAS.

CHRISTMAS! Word fraught with joy, with festivity, with home, with all that serves to lend a brighter hue to life! Christmas! Word laden with despairing sadness to those for whom life has proved but Dead Sea fruit! What can be a more pitiable object than decrepitude sinking under the accumulated load of years and of penury? Arrived at that period when the most fortunate confess they have no pleasure, how forlorn is her situation who, destitute of the means of subsistence, has survived her last child, or her last friend. Solitary and neglected, without comfort and without hope, depending for everything on a kindness she has no means of conciliating, she finds herself left alone in the world to which she has ceased to belong, and is only left in society as a burden it is impatient to shake off. And yet there is a bright side to this gloomy picture—a very bright and happy side, for, as it will be seen in our illustration, the dear old ladies are being cared for, and every comfort that ingenuity can suggest provided for them so as to render Christmas, if not a day of absolute rejoicing, at least a day for calm contemplation in surroundings cheering, consoling and protecting.

#### NEW LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE MISSISSIPPI JETTIES.

THE new first order lighthouse to be erected at the South Pass (Jetties) of the Mississippi River, is of iron, and was built some years ago for erection at Trinity Shoal, La., in deep water, and about twenty-five miles from the nearest land on the coast. While the working force was operating on the Shoal from a large wooden platform, supported on wooden piles driven into the sand, a hurricane swept over the locality, destroying the platform and causing a loss of a considerable portion of the ironwork of the foundation. Some of this iron was subsequently recovered. After the storm subsided it was ascertained that the action of an angry sea had scoured off the surface of the shoal to a depth varying from five to eight feet. In other words, where there was originally 15 feet depth of water, the storm created a depth of from 20 to 25 feet. As the shoal proved so unstable, the idea of building such a lighthouse on it was abandoned.

As a new lighthouse became necessary at the South Pass of the Mississippi River, and as much of the projected Trinity Shoal structure was on hand, it was deemed an economical measure to utilize the material at the new point.

The foundation is of wood, constructed in the most elaborate and painstaking manner, every conceivable device which will give solidity to the structure being used. On the spot where the tower is to be built the mud will be excavated for several feet, and then between 200 and 250 pine piles will be sunk through the mud into the sand. To these piles will be bolted 12x12 timbers, the cracks between the timbers being filled with bits of wood so as to make the structure solid. On the top of the 12x12 timbers and at right angles with them, a flooring of 12x12 timbers will be laid, securely bolted down by wrought-iron drift-bolts; and on this flooring another of timber of the same thickness will be put, the plank being laid at an angle of 45 degrees with that immediately below. The mud will then be thrown back upon it.

On this foundation are bolted nine disks, in which iron spikes are secured. One of these disks is placed in the centre of the foundation, and the other eight around it, at a distance of 20 feet, thus giving the structure an octagonal plan, the side of which will measure a little less than 15 feet and 3-8-10 inches.

The iron piles rise 20 feet perpendicularly, and then converge to a common centre in the focal plain. This gives the superstructure the form of

the frustum of an octagonal pyramid, measuring vertically 98 feet from the axis of the pile-head ties to a horizontal plane 3 1/4 inches below the upper surface of the watch-room floor, in which plain the axis of the inclined columns, at their extreme upper ends, are distant 4 feet 6 inches from the axis of the tower.

The columns of the first section are of wrought-iron, forged tapering. The columns of the other sections are of hollow cast-iron, decreasing in diameter as they ascend with the successive sections. The columns are secured together by cast-iron sockets, which also form points of attachment for the horizontal ties and the diagonal tension braces.

The columns support the watch-room and lantern. The focal plane of the latter is 12 feet 1 inch above the upper surface of the watch-room floor, the floor being 3 1/4 inches above the top of the pyramid, making the total height of the focal plane a little over 125 feet above the floor of the foundation. This height will enable the light to be seen fully eighteen nautical miles.

The light-house-keeper's dwelling, which occupies the second section, is two stories in height, built chiefly of iron, circular in form, and containing in the second story a door for each room opening on to the gallery around the outside.

#### THE LONG ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

THE new building of the Long Island Historical Society, which is to be turned over to the trustees on January 4th, is a handsome and substantial structure, on the corner of Pierpont and Clinton Streets, Brooklyn. The ground on which the building stands was purchased two years ago for \$32,000. It adjoins the site of the Church of the Holy Trinity, which, with its tall spire and Gothic architecture, affords a striking contrast to its square and sturdy neighbor. The contrast is still further enhanced by the materials used in the building—brown stone for the church and Philadelphia brick, with terra cotta trimmings, for the Society building. This structure is three stories high, and has a front of ninety-nine feet in Pierpont Street, and seventy-five feet in Clinton Street. The height is not far from 100 feet, and a clock tower surmounts the main entrance in Pierpont Street.

The ornamentation upon the street side is elaborate, and includes native fruits, flowers and cereals, done in terra cotta, molded when wet. On the Pierpont Street side, between the windows of the second story, are the portrait heads of Columbus and Franklin done in terra cotta, and on the side adjoining Clinton Street the heads of Shakespeare, Beethoven, Gutenberg and Michael Angelo, in high relief, are represented. Beneath them is the legend *Historia Festis Temporum*.

The front bears the name of the Society, and over the doorway are the words "Library and Museum." The doorway is flanked by the heads of an Indian and a Norwegian. The only stones used in the structure are three polished granite pillars under the porch on each side. Upon entering the building the main hall will be found upon the first floor, with dimensions of 80 feet by 50 feet. The floor rises toward the rear from the platform, which is in the further end. The hall will seat 600 persons, and has four exits. Above this are the library and reading-rooms. There will be shelf-room for 100,000 volumes, and the reading-rooms, for both men and women, will be as comfortable as possible. The Society has now 40,000 books and pamphlets, estimated to be worth \$80,000. Most of these have been collected since the incorporation in 1863.

Upon the third floor of the building the museum will be established, and many historical objects of interest will be displayed. In addition to the museum, upon the floor will be a room which can be shut off by sliding-doors for scientific meetings and other discussions which attract only a few persons. The structure throughout is finished in ash, and it will be heated by steam. The entire cost of the building will be nearly \$110,000. To meet this a fund has been accumulating for a number of years. It has been expended under the direction of a committee of which Samuel B. McLean is chairman. The President of the Society is the Rev. Dr. Richard S. Storrs, pastor of the Church of the Pilgrims, and the librarian, Mr. George S. Hanna.

#### OUR NATIONAL INDUSTRIES.

##### THE VINEYARDS OF SONOMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA.

GENERAL as has become the use of California wines, not only in this country, but in England, France, China, Japan, Australia and the Sandwich Islands, to which places regular consignments are now shipped, it is believed that the industry of viniculture has not yet passed out of the experimental stage. The gifts of nature are so vast in that section of our country, and the energy of man so tireless, that the possibilities of the future are scarcely comprehended.

The chief grape-growing districts are the Sonoma and the Sacramento Valleys, although the St. Helena District is a heavy contributor to the general vintage. For many years viniculturists clung to what was known as the Mission grape, but of late years nearly all have adopted foreign vines, and from this enterprise the vast growth of the industry really dates. The preference for foreign varieties of grapes is universal among the vineyardists of Sonoma Valley. In addition to Malvoisie, the Zinfandel and the Reising, the Chasselas, the Gutedel and the White Frontignon are being extensively cultivated there. The White Frontignon has been adopted as a Muscat grape, the Muscat of Alexandria not finding any favor among the Sonoma viniculturists. One grape which is coming into great favor in Sonoma Valley for the manufacture of a sweet wine is the Flame Tokay. Some viniculturists esteem it very highly. It yields what is known as the lower gross of the famous Tokay mountain of Hungary. The grape has to be picked when nearly a raisin, and the juice is a thick syrup. Fine qualities of red wine are now made in Sonoma, especially from the first and second crops of the Zinfandel vine. The Zinfandel is now without doubt proven to be the best claret grape grown in California. During the past few years, under the efforts of a few enterprising merchants, the sale and consumption of California wines in the Atlantic Coast market and cities has greatly increased, and is now one of the most important branches of the business. The single house of A. Werner & Co., 308 Broadway, New York, who were pioneers in popularizing California wines in this market, bottle and pack an average of over 1,200 gallons weekly of Sonoma and Napa white wines, which, as America Extra Dry Champagne, are distributed to all cities and States east of the Rocky Mountains. Shipments have also been made to Europe and South America.

In the Sacramento Valley the vineyards are devoted almost exclusively to the Orleans and Zinfandel wines. The Orleans grape produces the finest white wine, and contains all the characteristics of Rheish wines. It is a fine bearer, and the fruit is sweet, matures early and ripens uniformly. The prevailing varieties in the St. Helena District are the Zinfandel, the Black Malvoisie, the Reising, the Chasselas and the Burgher. Only a very small quantity of Mission grape wine (red and white) was manufactured in the St. Helena District during the past year. The little that was manufactured was either shipped to San Francisco for local consumption or was converted into brandy, port and Angelica.

Each variety of grape is better adapted to the manufacture of a specific wine than any other. Thus, for red and white wine, the Zinfandel stands pre-eminent. For hock wines, the preference is given the Orleans, the Chasselas, the Reising and the Gutedel. The Mission, the Malvoisie, and the Tenturier are better adapted for the manufacture of

port. The Muscat of Frontignon, the Muscat of Alexandria, the Gray Dechay, and possibly the Flame Tokay make better sweet white wine than anything else, and they are better adapted for that description of wine than any other yet experimented with. For the manufacture of brandy, experts give the preference to Folle Blanche and the Burgher, the latter being good to mix with other white wines, as it is neutral in its flavor, but tart. Some of the foreign varieties of vines which are considered practically worthless in Europe have been quite successful here. The Chasselas is a notable instance. In France it is a complete failure, and in Germany it is only a partial success.

The phylloxera has not made its presence felt very perceptibly anywhere outside of the Sonoma Valley. The Napa vineyards claim to be entirely free from it. Its ravages in Sonoma Valley are by no means general. So far it has not touched any of the foreign vines. All its depredations are confined to the Mission variety. It seems to have lodged itself in soil where water remains standing on the surface for a long time. Soil on the uplands not thoroughly drained is thus affected. A patch of fifteen acres of vines in one yard has been completely destroyed by it, and a patch of five acres in another yard has been overrun in the same manner. But the vines outside of these patches show no signs of the presence of the pest. Whether it will attack the foreign varieties with the same vigor as it has the Mission vine is something which time only will prove. Possibly the precautions now being taken by the viniculturists to prevent the pest from spreading, and the remedies applied for its extermination will be crowned with success. The steps thus far taken by the vineyardists seem to have been effective in confining it to those localities in which it first made its appearance.

Data have already been gathered showing that the yield of wine from the Los Angeles vineyards for this year will amount to 1,800,000 gallons, and of brandy 250,000, with the prospect that over 1,000,000 will be received in the country for this crop alone. At least 1,000,000 vines were planted in this country in the past year, and the prospect is that an equal amount will be planted next. The fact is that the wine industry in Los Angeles County is destined to expand wonderfully. In no part of the world does the grape come to greater perfection than here, and it is a crop that never fails. In exceptional years, like the present, the yield is enormous, and with the prices paid by the wine-makers there is no crop the cultivator can raise which will afford so large a net money return. There is scarcely a spot in the country in which a vineyard cannot be successfully planted, and with careful cultivation the vines will thrive without irrigation.

#### A STATE FAIR FOR ABUSED CHILDREN.

A STATE fair for abused children, in charge of 6,000 ladies, representing the different cities and towns, in aid of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, was opened in Horticultural Hall, Boston, on Wednesday evening, December 8th. Addresses were made by Gov. Long and Mayor Prince, and after a concert by the Germania Band, the enterprise was declared open.

In the upper hall-tables and booths are ranged along the walls; a flower table, prettily decorated, is in the centre, and on the platform is a harvest-table, one of the most attractive of all. It is presided over by Mrs. Francis Low, of Chelsea. Miss Maude Howe and other young ladies are in charge of the flower-table, and the other tables are arranged as follows: Boston, Mrs. H. C. Hasbrouck, of Boston; art and stationery, Mrs. J. Amory Codman, of Boston; Plymouth County, Mrs. N. J. B. Lincoln, of Hingham; Norfolk County, Mrs. Winslow Warren, of Dedham; children's table, Mrs. Charles O'Neill, of Charlestown; Dorchester annex, Miss Florence Everett, of Dorchester; Essex County, Mrs. William H. Ladd, of Lynn; Bristol County, ladies of New Bedford; donation table, Mrs. John L. Hill, of Boston; Worcester County, Mrs. John A. Dana, of Worcester; Middlesex County annex, Mrs. John W. Hastings, of Medford; Middlesex County, Mrs. Thomas S. Mandell, of Newton; Hampshire, Hampshire, Franklin and Berkshire Counties, Mrs. C. L. Smith, of Boston, and Mrs. Theodore Judah, of Greenfield. Home-made pickles and preserves are sold by Mrs. F. B. Fay and Mrs. Sibyl M. Hunt, of Chelsea; candy by Mrs. Henry G. Fay, the *Children's Appeal*, a daily paper, by Mrs. Edith Alken. Mrs. Kate P. Ward is president of a "mental pharmacy" table, and Mrs. Charles Blaney, of Dorchester, manages a loan collection.

A café has been opened in the lower hall. It is in charge of Mrs. C. A. Vinton, who has received generous contributions from churches and individuals. There is no charge for admission to this department, and for the accommodation of business men and women, a hot dinner will be served between the hours of 12 and 2.

The fair is to close on the 18th.

#### THE PROPOSED SITE FOR THE WORLD'S FAIR OF 1883.

ON Wednesday, December 8th, the Executive Committee of the World's Fair unanimously adopted a resolution calling for a detailed report from the Committee on Sites which selected Inwood as the best locality for the purpose. As a scene of natural beauty this site is not surpassed by any other locality around New York City, and its surroundings and the various avenues of approach to it are full of romantic and beautiful places, around many of which are historical and legendary associations of the richest character. It occupies 250 acres of the almost level plain on the banks of the Harlem River, at the extreme northern end of Manhattan Island. There is on the ground only a small hill, which is perhaps an acre in extent and twenty or thirty feet high. All the rest of the site is level or gently sloping ground, ready for building without previous grading. The soil to the edge of the water is sandy, and no complaint has ever been made of malarial or other troubles incident to marshy ground, such as lies to the east of the Harlem. The site is surrounded on every side by heights, on several of which are the earthworks, still in existence, of forts successively held by American and British troops under command of General Washington and Lord Howe.

The property is largely owned by private individuals. It has a frontage of one mile on Broadway or the Kingsbridge Road. The land is nearly level, and from it a fine view of High Bridge and other surrounding points of interest may be had. Near by 400 Hessians slain in the Revolutionary War were buried. The site is 1,400 feet from the Hudson River at the nearest point, and there are already two good docks built on the Harlem. It is fifty-three minutes' ride from the Grand Central Depot by elevated railroad as at present constructed, and only sixteen minutes by the Hudson River Railroad. The site is in the Harlem along the front of the property varies in depth from eighteen to forty feet at low tide. The boats from Jersey City will have no difficulty in landing there. The Albany boat companies have already secured land for docks.

Besides the facilities for reaching the place by the railroads, elevated and surface, the horse-cars and steamboats, there are half a dozen drives either complete or near completion by which New Yorkers may go to the fair. The Tenth Avenue is completed to the point of the bluff south of the site, and will be continued around Fort George Avenue to Eleventh Avenue. New Avenue, Eleventh Avenue and Audubon Avenue, which are already laid out, will be completed, and from the point of intersection shown on the map to the fair grounds a boulevard will be made. Broadway is now a boulevard all the way to the ground, and the ridge road, leading through some of the finest private parks in America, affords as pleasant a drive to-day as can be found anywhere.

#### PERSONAL GOSSIP.

MR. GARRETT has been re-elected President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

CAPT. H. W. HOWGATE, of the Signal Service Office, has tendered his resignation unconditionally.

THE Rev. Leigh R. Brewer was consecrated Bishop of Montana, at Watertown, N. Y., on December 8th.

THE Empress of Austria has taken Ormonl Castle, Kilkenny, for six weeks' hunting with the Kilkenny hounds.

THE friends of Senator Lamar apprehend that his health will not permit his attendance in the Senate again. He is said to be very feeble.

THE trustees of the Central Independent Church of Chicago, of which Professor David O. Swing is pastor have raised his salary from \$7,000 to \$10,000.

MR. FRANK BUCKLAND, the English naturalist and pisciculturist, is suffering from a severe attack of dropsy and now lies in a very critical condition.

THE Emperor William of Germany has been, during the past year, earning the gratitude of the archaeologists. He has defrayed from his own private purse the expenses of the excavations at Olympia.

GENERAL WILLIAM B. HAZEN has been appointed Chief Signal Officer of the army. This appointment promotes General McCook, of General Sherman's staff, to the colonelcy of the Sixth Infantry.

EX-QUEEN ISABELLA has ordered her bankers to invest largely in Panama Canal shares. Prince Hohenzollern, German Ambassador to France, has congratulated M. de Lesseps on the financial success of the enterprise.

PROFESSOR NORDENSKJÖLD has just been elected a member of the Swedish Legislature. He was supported by a so-called party of the Bourne, while his opponent, a manufacturer, was the candidate of the Laborers' Party.

SIR RICHARD WALLACE, who had a coupon calling for \$220,000 annually, used to be the largest creditor of France, but now M. Fortado draws a million francs a quarter, which represents an investment of \$16,000,000 in the funds.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL EDWARD O. C. ORD, being over 62 years of age, has, by direction of the President, been retired from active service and ordered to repair to his home in Washington. Colonel N. A. Miles has been made a brigadier-general.

THE Czarowitz, the heir to the Russian throne, is intensely popular with all classes in his country. He is prodigiously Russian in feeling, has shown a decided will and strong character in all the public duties that have been committed to him, and is an excellent husband and father.

THE marriage of Prince William of Prussia, eldest son of the Crown Prince, with Princess Augusta Victoria of Augustenburg, seems to be definitely fixed for the 26th of February. The royal pair, it also appears, will reside at Potsdam in Summer, in the Marble Palace, and Winter in the Schloss.

MR. GLADSTONE'S withdrawal from the House of Commons is demanded by his physician, who says that the Premier's health cannot stand such an arduous Parliamentary session as the forthcoming one promises to be. It is currently reported that after the Budget is made known Mr. Gladstone will accept a peerage and retire to the Upper House.

GENERAL SIR FREDERICK ROBERTS has been so successful as a man of war that he is to be made a lieutenant-general in spite of the fact that he will have to pass over the heads of one hundred and eighty officers who stand senior to him on the list of major-generals. The freedom of the City of London and a sword of honor are to be presented to him.

NEXT to Mr. Marsh, our Minister to Italy, the oldest American representative abroad by consecutive years of service is Mr. Bingham, Minister to Japan, whose appointment dates from May, 1873. Mr. Marsh was appointed in 1861; Mr. Delaplaine, Secretary of Legation in Vienna, was appointed in 1869; and Mr. Wurts, Secretary in Rome, in the same year.

ANOTHER Bill relative to the case of Gen. Fitz-John Porter has been introduced in the Senate. The Bill, a substitute for the one which occasioned so long a debate, authorizes the President to reinstate Porter in the Army with a rank not higher than that of colonel on the retired list, and without any pay or allowance for the time which has passed since his dismissal by court-martial.

SOME time since the now deposed Bishop of Tournai asserted that he had in his possession an autograph letter from Pius IX., in which that Pontiff wrote that the election of Cardinal Pecci as his successor would be the ruin of the Church. A confidential agent who was sent to Belgium has seen the letter and brings back an assurance of its authenticity, which is now admitted at the Vatican.

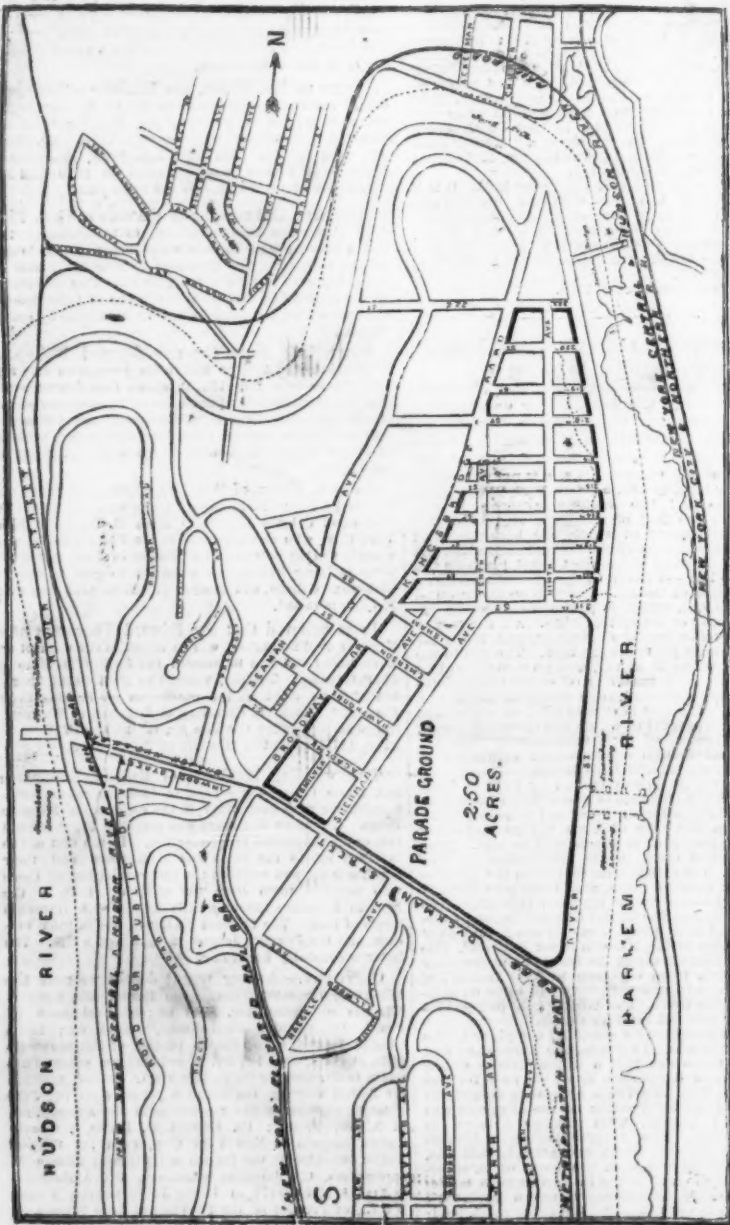
JOHN B. HOYT, of Stamford, Conn., has promised to give \$2,500 to Richmond (Va.) College, and \$2,500 to Richmond Colored Institute. John H. Doane, of New York City, who was a private in the Federal army, was wounded in the battles around Fredericksburg, and spent a day in Libby Prison, has promised to give \$1,000 to Richmond College, and another \$1,000 on condition that \$20,000 is raised.

It is believed that Sir Edward Thornton, now Minister at Washington, will be raised to the rank of an Ambassador and sent to succeed the Earl of Dufferin at St. Petersburg. The post vacated by Sir Edward Thornton will be filled by the promotion of Francis Clare Ford, Esq., formerly Secretary of Legation at Washington, who succeeded the late Mr. G. Buckley-Matthew in June, 1879, as British Minister to Rio de Janeiro.

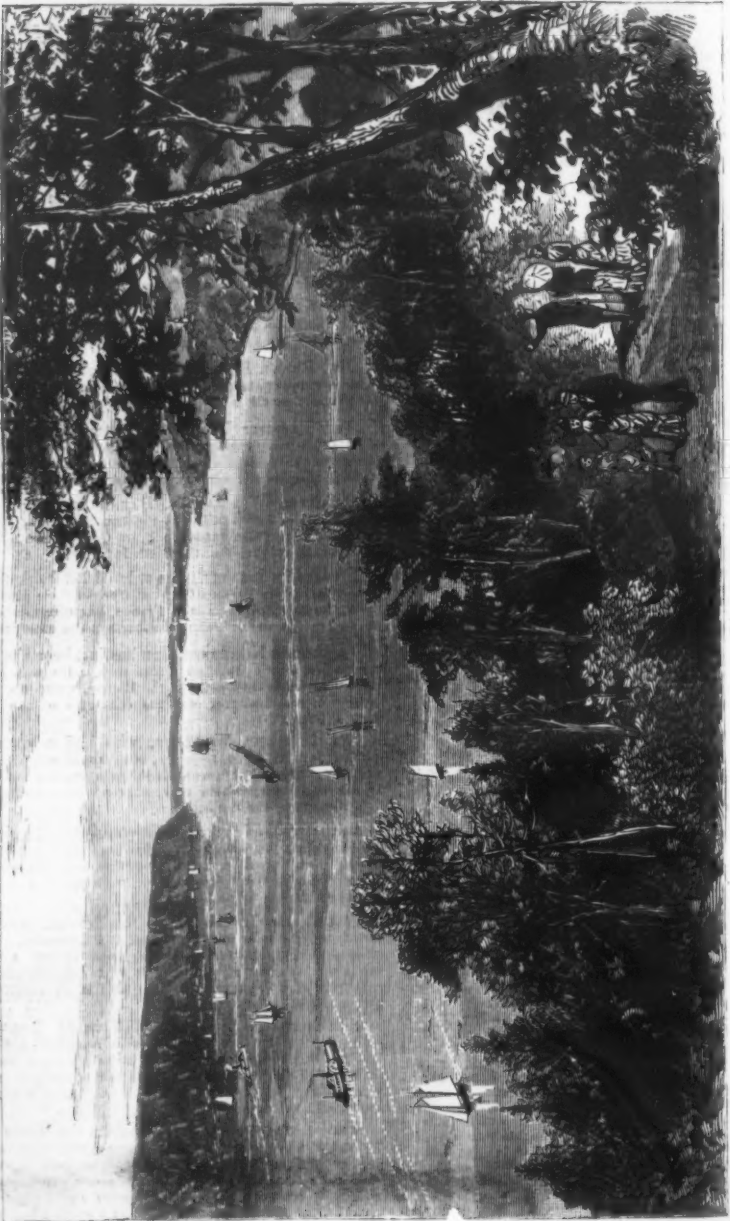
THE wedding breakfast of Roland Bonaparte and Marie Blanc was served in fourteen salons communicating with each other, in the residence of Madame Blanc. The show of flowers was magnificent; roses and real orange-blossoms preponderated. In the first of the fourteen salons the bride and bridegroom and their families stood and received the congratulations of those who followed them from the church. Both of the Monaco heiresses are tiny little beings with immense heads of hair. The Princess Radzwill was in pink brocade, and the Princess Jeanne in blue and white. The latter is decidedly handsome.

OBITUARY.—Among recent deaths we note the following: Professor Wilhelm von Hamm, late Austrian Minister of Agriculture, aged 60; Colonel John W. Peard, "Garibaldi's Englishman," aged 69; Louis Charles Timbal, a well-known painter of religious subjects, at Paris, aged 59; Dr. Alfred Hudson, senior Physician in Ordinary to Queen Victoria, in Ireland, aged 72; Sir James Colville, the Scottish jurist, aged 70; P. d'Alzon, Superior of the Augustines of the Assumption, at Nîmes, France; Dr. Edward H. Dixon, the well-known surgeon of New York City, aged 72; General Reffye, inventor of the French mitrailleuse; Shogei N. Sameshima, the Japanese statesman, and Ambassador to France since 1874, at Paris; Judge Charles Fisher, D.C.L., ex-Premier of the Province of New Brunswick, and Judge of the Supreme Court, aged 71; Father Chambois, late Vicar General of the Galveston (Texas) Diocese.

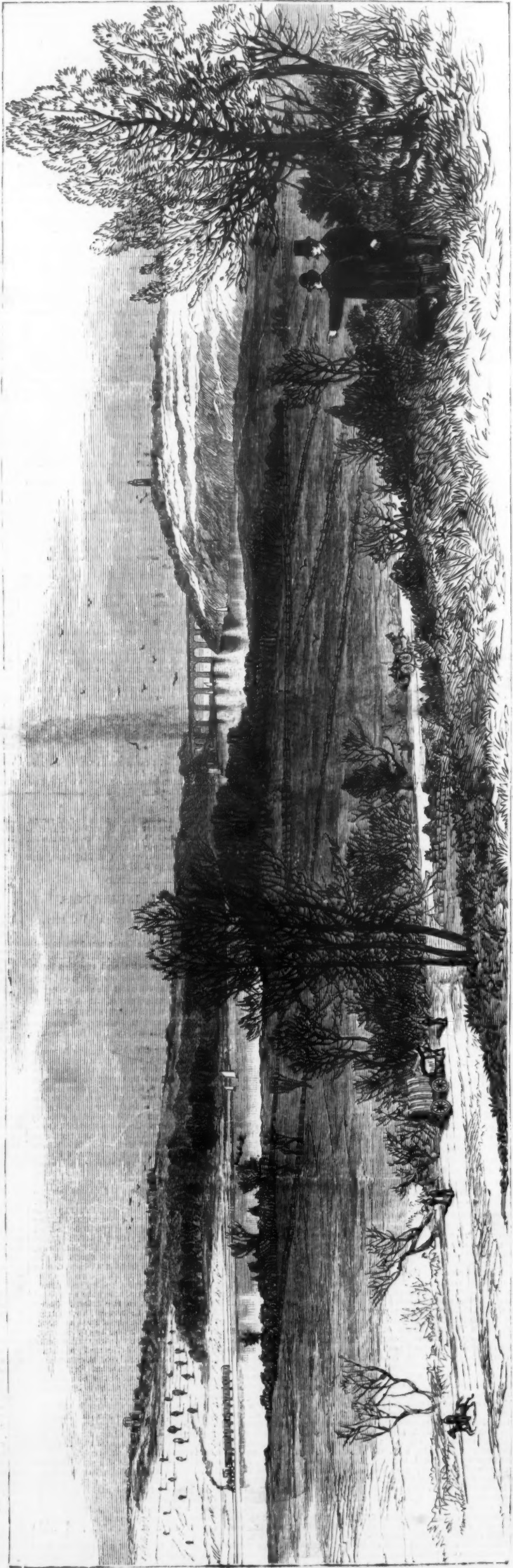




MAP OF THE SITE.



VIEW UP THE HUDSON FROM THE SITE.



GENERAL VIEW OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING COUNTRY, LOOKING TOWARDS HIGH BRIDGE.  
NEW YORK.—THE PROPOSED SITE FOR THE WORLD'S FAIR OF 1883, AT INWOOD.—SEE PAGE 271.





HON. JAMES L. PUGH, UNITED STATES SENATOR-ELECT FROM ALABAMA.—FROM A PHOTO. BY BRADY.

#### LAWRENCE BARRETT, THE TRAGEDIAN.

LAWRENCE BARRETT, the tragedian, whose portrait is given on this page, was born in New York in 1837. At fifteen years of age he was a linen clerk in a Detroit drygoods house, but, finding the employment uncongenial, engaged himself as a supernumerary at a city theatre at a salary of \$2 a week. Studying industriously and conscientiously, he gradually made his way, until, after various discouraging experiences, he acquired a solid stage footing. One of his first successes was in playing *Richmond* to *Coldock's Richard*. From that time to the present, with the exception of brief service in the army during the War of the Rebellion, he has been constantly before the public. His first appearance in New York was in 1856, when he played *Sir Thomas Clifford* to the *Julia* of an inexperienced actress. His success in this part secured him an engagement at Burton's Theatre, where he became a favorite. Whatever is of interest in the subsequent career of Mr. Barrett may be briefly stated. He was manager of the Varities Theatre in New Orleans during the season of 1863-64; in 1867 he visited England, where he was received with favor; in 1869 he became manager, with John McCullough, of the California Theatre, San Francisco; in the following year he played second to Booth at Booth's Theatre, and since 1871 or 1872 he has been before the public as a star. The most notable among the successes of Mr. Barrett have been in "*Rosdale*," "*Or, The Rifle-ball*," "*The Man o' Airle*," "*Dan'l Druce*," "*Yorick's Love*," *Cassius* in "*Julius Caesar*," *Richieu* in "*Henry VIII.*" He will appear at the Park Theatre in New York City on the 20th instant in Howell's play—a translation—of "*Yorick's Love*."

The Rev. David Swing, of Chicago, in a recent article in the *Advance*, of that city, says: "The fame of Mr. Barrett is good in quality, being that of a careful student in his field of action. He has studied the aim and mission of the theatre, and has always studied well the highest need of the public. When he was reminded, a few weeks since, that he was to play in Chicago at a time when other great actors were also to be in the city, he answered that his heart was in the higher form of the drama, and that he would play in "*Julius Caesar*" all week, come gain or loss—in the money sense. His taste must have its way. It happened that his taste was not unrewarded, for his house was all week good in size and most excellent in quality, re-

flecting not only credit upon the esteemed actor, but the taste of the city. It is almost certain that the style of Cicero was the popular style of his period, and that the stage eloquence we now see and hear in Barrett's *Julius Caesar* is a good reproduction of that which moved the multitudes in the days of the tragedy; and thus this actor becomes a teacher of history, a lecturer in whose audiences there are no sleepy ones."

#### THE DISTINGUISHED DEAD IN SCULPTURE.

STATUE OF BLAISE PASCAL, FRANCE.

THE memorial statue to Blaise Pascal, the eminent French mathematician, author and inventor, who died in Paris in August, 1662, was unveiled in August last during a series of *fetes* in the City of Clermont-Ferrand. The statue, which is the work of M. Guillaume, a member of the Institute, was erected on the plaza of Saint-Herem, an elevated piece of ground forming a grassy square, from which may be seen both sides of the chain of mountains. Pascal is represented sitting, with the head thrown forward, in the attitude of meditation. It is the thinker that one sees, with the great eyes, the ascetic physiognomy, that we are acquainted with through the many portraits which have been engraved of him.

At sixteen, Pascal wrote a treatise on conic sections. He was received into the company of scientific men who were by far his seniors. When a few



LAWRENCE BARRETT, THE TRAGEDIAN.



LOUISIANA.—NEW LIGHTHOUSE UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT SOUTH PASS.—FROM DESIGNS FURNISHED BY CAPTAIN W. H. HEUER, LIGHTHOUSE ENGINEER.—SEE PAGE 271.

years older he invented a calculating machine, which might have been a great success had he been favored with the mechanical appliances now available for the use of modern inventors. He also invented several vehicles, of different styles and uses, and engaged in many scientific experiments following on the discoveries and researches of Galileo, Torricelli and Descartes.

When about thirty, he withdrew from society and lived the life of a recluse, interesting himself greatly in theological questions. At this time the Port Royalists were vigorously upholding the doctrines of Jansenius, and Pascal threw his influence in behalf of their supporters. He interested himself in their quarrel with the Jesuits, and in doing so brought upon himself the bitter hatred of that Order. His "*Provincial Letters*," on this subject, made him famous. Their condemnation by the Pope in 1657, and the sentence of the Parliament of Aix that they should be burned by the public executioner gave these "*Letters*" a much wider circulation than they would otherwise have had.

For the four years preceding his death he was a continual sufferer, yet a diligent student and a prolific writer. His complete works have been published in two editions, and numerous biographies of him have been written.

#### HON. JAMES L. PUGH,

UNITED STATES SENATOR FROM ALABAMA.

HON. JAMES L. PUGH, recently elected United States Senator from Alabama, was born in Burke County, Ga., Dec. 12th, 1819, and was four years of age when his father moved to Barbour County, Ala. At the age of eleven he was an orphan, beginning the battle of life with all the odds against him. He rode the mail route between Barbour and Henry Counties to earn money to enable him to attend school. He also served in a country store for several years. His intelligence and industry soon brought him to the notice of men of distinction. He read law with the late Governor John Gill Shorter, and for eleven years practiced successfully. Mr. Pugh entered politics as a candidate for Elector



THE DISTINGUISHED DEAD IN SCULPTURE.—STATUE OF BLAISE PASCAL AT CLERMONT, FRANCE.



NEW BUILDING OF THE LONG ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY AT BROOKLYN, TO BE OPENED JANUARY 4TH.—SEE PAGE 271.

upon the Taylor and Fillmore ticket in 1847. It will be remembered that Mr. Yancey and the State Rights Democracy took issue with General Cass upon the squatter-sovereignty views of that gentleman, and that General Taylor came very near carrying the vote of Alabama. The following year Mr. Pugh stood for Congress in his District, but was defeated by Henry W. Hilliard, who was then at the zenith of his brilliant career. In 1856 Mr. Pugh was successful as a Buchanan Elector, and in 1859 entered parliamentary life by election to Congress without opposition.

When the war broke out, Mr. Pugh joined the First Alabama Regiment as a private, and did his duty as a soldier until he was elected from the ranks to the Confederate Congress. He was again elected in 1863, and remained in Congress, at Richmond, until the surrender.

Since the war, Mr. Pugh has labored for the success of the Democratic Party, and on two occasions, heretofore, has polled a formidable vote for the Senatorship. According to the *Mobile Register*, "No man possesses in a higher degree the love of his neighbors and the respect of the people of Alabama. His personal appearance, his incisive and deliberate speech, his broad views of men and things, his amiable disposition, his purity of character, have for thirty years made him conspicuous in the narrow sphere of this State, and must render him illustrious upon the broader stage of national politics."

Politically, Senator Pugh may fairly be classed as a Bourbon. In a speech delivered after his nomination for Senator, he announced himself as a "representative man of the solid South—the glorious solid South." The failure of the Democrats at the late national election he ascribed to "short-lived and fictitious causes." He thinks, very justly, that the South "should shake off the delusion that there is magic healing, health and progress and prosperity in Federal office-holding." He then adds: "I hear some suggestions that we should abandon the Northern Democracy—that we should divide the solid South. Ah, gentlemen, it was never more important—there never was greater necessity for us to remain together as a united people. If we separate ourselves from the Northern Democracy we necessarily increase and intensify Northern sectionalism, and we will become the victims of sectionalism and centralism! Let us crystallize our solidarity. Let us hold ourselves steadily and firmly upon the high, broad line of sectional pacification and harmonious



union! Let us carry out in good faith, and to the best of our ability, by the exercise of delegated power, all the great national objects for which our confederated Republic was established, as recited in the preamble of the Constitution of the United States. But, gentlemen, remember, and let it be proclaimed to the world, that under no pains or penalties or punishments will we ever surrender the invaluable right of local self-government. I shall, with your permission, go into the Senate of the United States and plant myself upon the Constitution with all its amendments and obligations. I shall fix my eye upon my rule of action as the Christian fixes his eye upon the holy cross. To thine own State and people be true, and, as the day follows the night, thou canst not then be false to any other State or section."

## NEW BOOKS

**THE FIRESIDE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF POETRY.** Comprising the best poems of the most famous writers, English and American. Compiled and edited by Henry T. Coates. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1880.

Mr. Coates dedicates this admirable volume to his Alma Mater, Haverford College, and we have little doubt that it will secure an honored place in the college library. The selection is of the most happy, "from grave to gay, from lively to severe," while the classification is of such a nature as to enable the reader to select as may best suit his mood. Poems of Home and Childhood, of Memory and Retrospection, of Love, of Patriotism, of Nature, of History, of Sentiment, of Satire—in a word, the whole gamut of "verse thought" is played upon, and with such harmony as to secure the success of this delightful volume. The illustrations are thoroughly artistic and the letter-press quite in keeping.

**MY WINTER ON THE NILE.** By Charles Dudley Warner. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1881.

This charming book of travel will be read with avidity, and cause many a sigh to those who can only be Mr. Warner's *compagnon de voyage*—on paper. Telling his story after a fashion all his own, the author takes the reader across the Mediterranean and lands him at daybreak on the treasure-stored soil of Africa. Cairo is admirably described—its bazaars, mosques and tombs. The Pyramids are dealt with, and the chapter devoted to their description is all too short. The start up the Nile on the *Jackal*—a "Big Van Winkle"—is delightfully chatty, as indeed are the descriptions of the people on the banks of Old Nile, Christmas Day and Midwinter in Egypt. Thebes and her ruins are honored by more than passing mention, while the chapter "History in Stone" betrays warm archaeological tints. Passing the Cataract affords scope for good description, as does also the Desert. Life in Ethiopia is full of color; in fact, there is not a dull chapter in the entire book, albeit Mr. Warner does occasionally gush a little on Egyptology. That arch scamp, the ex-Khedive, stands out in bold relief. He was then in the full pomp of power, and some anecdotes of his inner life form very enjoyable reading. This book is taken up with pleasure and relished with regret, and any person desirous of becoming intimately acquainted with Old Nile could not do better than Winter there with Mr. Dudley Warner, even though it be—on paper only.

**AMERICAN POEMS.**—Longfellow, Whittier, Bryant, Holmes, Lowell and Emerson, with biographical sketches and notes. Holiday edition. Illustrated. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1880.

Mr. Longfellow, in this admirable compilation, leads with "Evangeline," Mr. Whittier with "Snow-bound," Mr. Bryant with "Solitude," Mr. Holmes with "Grandmother's Story," and Mr. Emerson with the "Vision of Sir Launfal." The selection is admirable, the brightest leaf being plucked from each laurel-wreath. The volume is elegantly gotten up, and the illustrations of considerable artistic merit.

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

**WILD ROSES OF CAPE ANN AND OTHER POEMS.** By Lucy Larcom. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

**THE LATEST OF THE BODLEY BOOKS.**—MR. BODLEY ABROAD. With illustrations. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

**STORIES AND ROMANCES.** By H. E. Scudder. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

**LITTLE AMY'S CHRISTMAS.** By Nelson J. Vance. With illustrations. New York: The American News Company, Publishers' Agents.

## TO HOLIDAY PURCHASERS.

HOLIDAYS AT A. T. STEWART & CO.'S.

ONE of the sights of the world is the wondrous store of A. T. Stewart & Co.'s, on Broadway, occupying as it does an entire block, towering high over all the surrounding buildings, and standing more like the marble palace of a potentate than the busy hive of a commercial mart. Once across the massive portals, what a marvelous sight meets the eye! Color everywhere in gorgeous clots—from the India shawl, of a price that would cause Lord Beaconsfield's Neuchâtel to pause, to the luminous ribbon plucked from the Lyons loom; from the Persian rug, with its wondrous yellow and ensanguined reds, to the dainty hose from the spindles of Balbriggan color everywhere, till the appetite of the eye becomes banqueting and the very voluptuousness of sight-gratification languidly asserts itself. A Babel of "the tongues of sweet women" greets the ear, from the shrill ejaculation to the soft, persuasive; from the "Ain't it quite too lovely for anything?" to the sorrowful "I guess I'll have to do without it." On all sides the "women of our native land" are chattering, gesticulating, selecting, rejecting, while the patient and courteous employees reveal treasures such as the rubbing of the lamp unfolded to Aladdin. Victims in the shape of fathers, husbands, lovers, too, are in plenty, and the look of triumph on the faces of daughter, wife or sweetheart, as they press through the incoming throng, tells of victory. Elevators are ascending and descending with unusual rapidity; cash-trucks fly from end to end of counters; small boys are driven to the verge of insanity by the incessant repetition of "Cash, here!" floor-walkers cannot find vacant seats, while the magic word "Forward" ceases to produce the desired effect of procuring an employee. In a word, Stewart's is it! Merry Christmas time is a sight worth traveling many miles to witness.

## WHERE TO GET FINE CLOTHING.

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ON A RECENT VISIT to the Laboratory of W. Champion Browning, M. D., of Philadelphia, Pa., we were amazed at its extent, surprised at the perfection of the machinery used, and at the exact mixing of every portion of the compounds of which the C. and C.

CORDIAL, his TONIC and ALTERNATIVE, and his ESSENCE OF JAMAICA GINGER, are made, and also the scrupulously neat manner of putting them up. Dr. Browning is a regular graduate of Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia, and, in his profession, has been quite eminent for his skill and knowledge; he is a perfect "chemist," and his "Proprietary Medicines" must not be confounded with "Patent Medicines" that are in the market. Dr. Browning's preparations are put up in excellent style, each bottle having a small corkscrew, thus avoiding the breaking of the cork; it is one of the neatest contrivances ever used. The medicine we have knowledge of, and so far as its merits are concerned, can commend in the highest terms; his Cough Medicine cannot be excelled. Dr. Browning does not propose, to cure every malady, but he tones up the system by his TONIC and ALTERNATIVE, and the Cough Medicine (the C. and C. CORDIAL) comes in perfect play.

## DIAMONDS AND FINE JEWELRY.

**E. KRETZMER**, manufacturing jeweler, No. 1311 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa., has one of the handsomest stocks in fine and antique jewelry in the trade. His latest designs in Gold and Diamond Work cannot be duplicated (some portion) in this country. His Bronzes and articles of vertu are of the latest importations, and for Holiday and Christmas presents he is prepared to fill all orders promptly, and can be relied upon in every respect. Those who send from out of the city will get every article warranted a *d* of the best.

If society in our own day were able to boast as great a genius as Charles Dickens's Mr. Ledbrain, of the Yorkshire Mudfog Association, in the dissection of statistics, we might, perhaps, learn how many roller blinds there are in use throughout the world, and what proportion the gross total bears to the five millions of HARTSHORN'S SELF-ACTING BLIND ROLLERS, which, it is asserted on good authority, are now in use. The invention is one of these happy "Yankee notions," especially devised to save labor, and, what is every whit as important, temper, for there are neither cords nor balances to break or get out of order, the working of the roller being altogether automatic.—*London Furniture Gazette.*

**CHRISTMAS FRUIT CAKE.**—Half a pound of butter, three-quarters of a pound of sugar, one pound of flour, one pound of currants, one pound of raisins, quarter of a pound of citron, four eggs, three-quarters of a cup of milk, two teaspoons of HECKER'S BAKING POWDER, mixed through the flour; mix butter (which must be soft) and sugar together, and break in one egg at a time. You must mix this cake with your hand. This cake can be kept from three to six months.—*American House-hold.*

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES offers one of the most timely and valuable of all the holiday presents. See advertisement.

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# HOLIDAY SUPPLEMENT

## FRANK LESLIE'S

# ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER

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HOLIDAY DOUBLE NUMBER.

### Deacon Weston's First Christmas.

By JANE G. AUSTIN.

"I'll have no Popish doings in my house, Christmas or no Christmas, and so I tell you, Harriett Phillips."

"Harriett Weston, if you please, father," replied the person addressed, making a sudden movement across the room and kneeling beside the arm chair where Farmer Weston sat, nursing his gouty foot upon a stool.

The young woman was tall, slender, and comely, with the steady hazel eyes, wide chin, and clean-cut lips that tell of decided character, and the capacity to rule or to submit as the will may direct.

The old man was tall also, but neither slender nor comely, for his form was gnarled and bent like one of the ancient cedars of his native New England coast; his face was tanned to the color and texture of old parchment, his mouth was hard and obstinate, and his eyes full of that wary anxiety which at seventy years of age has become the habit of life with men who wrest a living from New England soil.

As his handsome daughter-in-law knelt beside him, and clasping her firm, white hands upon his arm, looked up in his face, the farmer nestled uneasily to the other side of the chair, and replied, in a peevish tone:

"Well, Harriett Weston, then, though I must say the doings you talked of were a good deal more like your own folks than your ran's."

"Are they? Why should they be?" asked Harriett, demurely; "wasn't the birth of Christ as great a blessing to Presbyterians as Episcopalians? And if so, why shouldn't they seem just as glad on Christmas Day?"

"I don't know as I've said they shouldn't, have I?" retorted the old man, testily. "But what I do say and what I mean is, I ain't going to have any Popish crosses and wreaths and fixings generally put up in my house. I should look to see my father and gran'ther rise right out of their graves, let alone my gran'ther's gran-

ther, who came over here o' purpose to get away from Popish tyranny and wickedness. It's all well enough for you, seeing your father's a minister, and I suppose holds to all the English ways of his Church; but I tell you, girl, I'm going to hold to the ways of my own people and my own religion."

Without reply Harriett got up and arranged the cushion under the gouty foot, mended the fire of hickory logs, swept up the hearth, and, taking some sewing from the table, began stitching diligently at the sleeve of a dressing-gown she had planned, and was helping Mehitable to make for the invalid. Presently

she began to hum softly, and the former, who had tried to read, tried to think, tried to doze, and failed in all, said, with elaborate carelessness:

"Sing out, can't ye, Harry? I love to hear you sing."

"It's only an old hymn, and I dare say you know it," replied Harry as carelessly; and with a rich contralto voice began to sing—

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night, All seated on the ground."

Before she had finished the verse, a grum rumbling noise from the armchair reminded one of the rocks and cedars that responded to Am- phion's melody; and by the time they came to—

"Good - will henceforth from heaven to men, Begin and never cease"—

the bass ones almost overpowered the mezzo, and, united, they filled the wide, old kitchen and echoed back like fairy music from the array of burnished tin upon the dresser. The stamping of snowy feet in the porch heralded a new-comer, and as the voices blended on the last note, the door was thrown open, and a good-looking young fellow tramped into the room, his arms full of small branches of hemlock, arbor-vitæ, and ground pine.

"Bravo, father!" exclaimed he. "I haven't heard your voice come out so since you left the singing seats when I was a boy. I tell you, this girl of mine can make old folks young and dumb folks rejoice."

"Oh, I always was one to sing psalms when others did. Paul says for all Christian folks to do that," replied the father, a little shamefacedly; and the son heartily assented with—

"That's so, father; Paul and you are about right. Well, Harry, my girl, here is some of your green stuff to go to work on, and there's plenty more at the barn that I'll fetch as it's wanted."

"I'm sorry you had the trouble, Dick," replied Harriett, steadily, "for we're not going to put up any greens. Father thinks it's best not."

"Ho!" exclaimed the son in dismay; but a warning look from his wife checked any further expression of discontent, and he was stooping



DEACON WESTON'S FIRST CHRISTMAS.—"IN A MOMENT SHE WAS KNEELING AT THE OLD MAN'S FEET, HOLDING UP THE SMILING BABY."



to gather up the branches already heaped in a corner, when farmer Weston, clearing a throat somewhat husky from its late exertions, in a sort of off-hand style:

"Oh, I don't say but what you can do as you've a mind to in your own room, Harriett; and the fore-room, too, is more yours than our'n now. Mother won't never go in there again, poor soul, till she lays in the middle of it, where all her children but two have laid, and one of 'em had better have been there. Yes, you may do as you like in the fore-room and your own room, children, though I'd a leetle rather you didn't put anything up to the windows, on account of the speech of people. I being a deacon so, and all."

"Oh, thank you, thank you, father!" exclaimed Mrs. Dick, coming to kiss the narrow furrowed brow, that actually reddened under the salute; "and you may be sure I will put up nothing that can show from the outside. I am so much obliged, for it would have seemed sad enough to do nothing for Christmas. I don't doubt those shepherds did something in the way of rejoicing."

"Well, I'll go back to the barn, old lady, and when I come to dinner I'll bring a lot more branches. If you want me before, just blow the horn at the back-door, or let Mehitable run over and tell me."

But long before dinner-time—in fact only a very short time from his departure—Dick Weston opened the kitchen-door and looked in with a face strangely blanched and altered from its previous ruddy joviality. His wife sat on her own side of the fire deftly tying the sprigs of evergreen into thick, firm bands, of which any sort of festoon, trimming, or wreath could be readily formed, and the old man at the other side of the fire, his bony hand shading his eyes from the blaze, watched the graceful work with a smile of placid content. It was a pretty picture, but Dick did not pause to contemplate it, but, passing through the room to the passage at the front of the house, summoned his wife with a look as he passed behind his father's chair. Quietly brushing the greens from her white apron Harriett obeyed, and not until they were well out of hearing, did she exclaim, "What is the matter, Dick! You are as white as a ghost!"

"A ghost!" echoed the young man, laughing nervously. "Well, no wonder. Come up to our own room and I will tell you."

Ten minutes later Harriett re-entered the kitchen to take a warm shawl from its peg, slip her feet into snow-boots and throw a knitted fabric, called a rigolette, over her head. The farmer watched all these operations with interest, as he did all his daughter-in-law's movements, and presently asked:

"What now, Mrs. Dick? Going out?"

"Only to the barn, father," replied the young woman, careful not to turn toward him her glistening eyes and burning cheeks. "I have a new idea for my Christmas decorations, and am going to see what Dick has out there. You said I might do what I liked in my own room and the parlor."

"Yes, whatever you like, so that you don't bother me. When are you going to finish that stuff?"

"Oh, pretty soon. Is it in the way? Shall I carry it up-stairs before I go out?"

"No, no; I'd just as lief you'd sit there and do it. It don't trouble me none, and pleases you."

Truth to tell, it was something more than not being bothered; it was a positive pleasure to the crippled old man to see that shapely figure and blooming face seated opposite him, to watch the white, strong fingers at their work, and listen or join in the Christmas hymns and carols the clergyman's daughter had for so many years sung and taught in her parish choir. So, as the minutes passed into half an hour and an hour, and still her chair remained vacant, the old man grew restless, impatient, and finally downright cross. Mehitable, who was baking pies in the brick oven of the outside kitchen, looked in from time to time, now at him, and now at the paralytic wife, who lay so patiently in the bedroom, opening into the front kitchen, and had lain since Christmas three years before, when she was stricken down, body and soul, by what her neighbors justly described as a shock. But to all Mehitable's kind, if somewhat independent, offer of refreshment, amusement, or conversation, the farmer returned but surly answers, and presently inquired:

"What on earth is Mrs. Dick doing out to the barn all this time? She'll get her death of cold, and there'll be another one laid up, and who's to nuss her?"

"Oh, Mrs. Dick! She came in quite a spell back," replied Mehitable, craning her neck at the window to try to see the barn door. "Run round to the front o' the house as spry's a fox, and straight up-stairs. Well, I declare for't, there's Mr. Dick, with a whole lot o' green stuff on the sled, and Bill hitched up, and he's a driving of it round to the front. What's that for?"

"Oh, they're a fixing up their own room for Christmas; I give 'em leave," replied the old man, testily. "You'd better go in and see if Mrs. Weston don't want some gruel or something."

"I was in just this minute, and I guess I'd better squint into the oven first," replied the "help." "Seems to me I smell them pies a scorchin'."

Just before dinner-time Harriett again appeared, her face radiant, her voice jubilant, and, gathering up her greens, heaped them all into a basket. The surly deacon, absorbed in the week-old newspaper, never raised his eyes, but presently found a glass at his lips, while his daughter-in-law's blithe voice declared:

"Here's your medicine, father. Half-past eleven and more. You must get up an appetite, for dinner."

"Much you care whether I do or not,"

grumbled the deacon, yet took the draught, and then sat watching the graceful form moving so swiftly, yet so deftly, around the room, laying the table for dinner, arranging the curtains to screen the sunshine from his eyes, gliding into the bedroom to say a few cheery words to the patient invalid, and then back to add some symmetrical touches to Mehitable's somewhat slap-dash style of putting dinner upon the table. Then she ran to the back-door to blow the horn for Dick, who presently appeared, shivering with cold and cleanliness. The stern demand for blessing was uttered by the deacon's lips, and the meal proceeded, Harriett's first care being to prepare a dainty tray for Mrs. Weston, who dined under Mehitable's superintendence at the same time, thus sparing the feelings of that young woman, who, until Harriett's arrival, had sat at the table with the farmer and his son, and fancied that she had, herself, instituted the present arrangement.

"Timothy has dressed the turkey for to-morrow, Harry," remarked her husband. "A good ten-pounder it is, and as tender as chicken."

"I guess them shepherds didn't have turkey for dinner, nor think of it," said the deacon with a grim smile, as he turned to his daughter-in-law.

"No, but they could feast their eyes and ears and did it," replied she. "They were more glad than we, and we try to imitate their joy with our evergreens, and our good dinner, and our happy hearts and faces."

"Easy enough for them to be happy that have nothing to worry them," replied the old man, with a sigh that was almost a groan; and Harriett, rolling her chair back to the hearth-corner, softly sang:

"Hark! the herald-angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled."

"You don't know nothing about it, child, not the first thing," muttered the old man, clasping the fresh, young hand in his bony and callous one: "God and sinners ain't reconciled so easy as that."

"No, father, dear," returned the girl in a whisper, "but after Christmas comes Good Friday, and after the cradle the Cross." Then she turned again to the table and hastily carried some articles into the pantry whence she presently came, with a basket, showing some branches of evergreen at the top. The old man watched her jealously.

"Now, what are you going to do?" asked he. "Why don't you come and sit down and tie your evergreens here?"

"I will, pretty soon, father," replied Harry. "But I have something to do up stairs first, and then Dick is coming to help me in the parlor. You'll let us take you in to see the decorations, when they're all ready, won't you?" The old man nestled in his chair, scowled, and muttered something incredible, but the next moment Harry was kneeling at his chair arm, the pretty hands clasped upon his breast, and those clear, brown eyes fixed beseechingly upon his.

"You'll come with the shepherds and your children to welcome the Christmas baby, won't you, father dear?"

"If it'll do you any good, da'ter, I'll go in and look when it's all fixed," replied the deacon, a smile softening his rugged features like Christmas sunshine.

Harry rewarded him with a kiss upon the brow and went her way. Presently the deacon heard his son's voice guiding Bill, the white-faced farm-horse, round to the front door, and then Harry's blithe tones, directing, as it seemed, the bringing in of some large objects that scraped noisily against the sides of the doors.

"Sakes! What be they doing out there?" demanded Mehitable, pausing, with the tablecloth gathered in both hands, and turning her head over her shoulder.

"Fetching in trees to fix up the parlor," replied the deacon, as composedly as if he had arranged the whole programme. "Wonder if there was evergreen trees around that 'ere stable."

"Round the stable? You don't mean to say Mr. Dick's been cutting down the trees round the stable! Well, well, well! New lords make new laws, and that's a fact. That's Mrs. Dick's work, now!"

"I reckon your work's out in the wash-room, and you'd better be seeing to it there, Mehitable Joyce," replied the deacon, in an irate voice. "If every one in this house was as particular to follow out my wishes as Mrs. Weston is, things would jog a little easier."

"My sakes!" exclaimed Mehitable, slapping down the leaves of the table, and setting it up with a bang. "I'm glad Mrs. Dick's such a favor-ite, I'm sure. I only hope it'll last, right along." With which charitable aspiration Miss Joyce slammed the door, and was heard revenging her wounded dignity upon the dishes, which she washed with such vehemence that they had good need to be of stout delf, or they had never survived to bear the Christmas turkey. The deacon listened with an ugly scowl, and glanced angrily at his swathed foot; but from behind the door, at his other hand, rose Harry's blithe voice:

"The Holly and the Ivy  
Now both are full well-grown;  
Of all the trees that are in the wood,  
The Holly bears the crown—"

"I wish we had more of it, deacon! Pity it doesn't grow in New England, and has to be bought with a price!"

"The Holly bears a blossom  
As red as any blood,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
To poor sinners' good."

Chorus.

"O the rising of the sun,  
The running of the deer,  
The playing of the merry pipes  
Sweet singing in the choir!"

"The Holly bears a bark  
As bitter as any gall;  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
For to redeem us all!"

"Where did I get that? Oh, it's an old, old English carol. I know ever so many of them. Did you ever hear—"

"I saw three ships come sailing in  
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;  
I saw three ships come sailing in  
On Christmas Day in the morning."

"Pray whither sailed those ships all three,  
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day?  
Pray whither sailed those ships all three  
On Christmas Day in the morning?"

"O they sailed into Bethlehem—"

"And so on through nine verses. And then there is—"

"A Virgin most pure, as the prophets do tell,  
Bath brought forth a Babe, as it hath her befall,  
To be our Redeemer from death, hell and sin,  
Which Adam's transgression had wrapped us all in."

"Rejoice and be merry, set sorrow aside;  
Christ Jesus, our Saviour, was born at this tide."

"In Bethlehem city—in Jewry it was—  
Where Joseph and Mary together did pass,  
And there to be taxed, with many one mo',  
For Caesar commanded the same should be so."

"Rejoice and be merry, etc."

"There! That's just right. Now go, like a dear child, and bring the little branches, and don't forget your hammer and nails, and I'll run up for the curtains. Oh, it will be just splendid when it's done, deacon, won't it?"

A moment's interval followed, broken by a soft sound, at which the deacon grimly smiled, and leaning back, with a dreamy look upon his face, fell a-musing of his own young days, when, for a little while, soft words and softer kisses, and merry laughter and light hearted singing, had been the atmosphere of these old walls, so still and sad of late, with the wife of his youth lying stricken there, and his own health broken, and Dick away so much of the time, and— But at that point the cloud settled back upon the narrow brow, and smiting the arm of his chair with a clinched fist, the deacon muttered:

"No wonder the sunshine all went out of this house when Satan came in; no wonder Susan got a stroke, and I broke down all to once! It's all very well to say you'd ought to be reconciled and all, but—"

"Our swelling pride to cure  
With that pure love of Thine;  
O be Thou born within our hearts,  
Most holy Child Divine."

So sang Harry, and the deacon unclenched his hand and, folding it within the other, lay back in his chair looking so sad, so lonely, so broken, that Mehitable, coming to put wood on the fire, relented, and said, not unkindly:

"You look kind o' forlorn, deacon. Can't I get you nothing?"

"No—no," replied the old man, drawing his hand across his eyes. "Well, you might push my chair into the bedroom; I guess I'll talk to mother a spell. Maybe she's lonesome, too."

So Harry, glancing like sunlight into the kitchen presently, found it empty, and, hearing voices from the bedroom, went and peeped in, drew back and thought for a moment, with finger on lip, then quietly fetched the big Bible with pictures in it, and carrying it in, laid it upon the foot of the bed, open at the second chapter of St. Luke's Gospel.

"Don't you want to read a little to mother?" asked she, gently, of the old man. "I am so busy or I would."

"I'd just as lief," replied the aged deacon, with alacrity; and, putting the old silver-bowed spectacles astride his nose, began the chapter, while Harry went out to Mehitable in the back-kitchen to make a confidential communication, at which Miss Joyce forgot her anger, jealousy, and all sorts of uncharitableness, in pure joy, not unmixed with a good deal of human delight, at a mystery and an event.

"Yes, indeed, Mrs. Dick," exclaimed she, wringing out and snapping the last dish-towel. "I'll help you every way I'm able, and main glad o' the chance. Seems kind o' keeping Christmas in 'arnest, don't it?"

"Yes, keeping the soul as well as the body of it," replied Harriett, with a far-away look in her brown eyes.

The short December day waned, and in the twilight the young wife and her husband came to sit beside the hearth with their father, who had returned to his corner, and sat meditatively staring into the fire, which, freshly fed with dry fuel, sent its great banner of flame flaring up the wide-throated chimney, rejoicing in its own fashion that Christmas Eve had come again.

Dick, too, was very silent, furtively watching his wife, whose bright face was paler than his wont, and whose ordinarily steady lips and calm eyes showed unaccustomed nervousness and anxiety; even the white fingers so strongly interlaced upon her knee spoke of some deep emotion powerfully repressed. The deacon was first to speak.

"Can't you give us another of your Christmas hymns, daughter?" said he. "I don't know as I ever thought or heard so much about Christmas as I have to day."

But Harry's voice and heart were not attuned to carols just then, and she softly sang, to a quaint, yearning old tone:

"There is a stream whose waters rise  
Amidst the hills of Paradise,  
Where foot of man hath never trod,  
Proceeding from the Throne of God,  
Oh, give me sickness here or strife,  
So I may reach that Spring of Life!  
There is a people who have cast  
All strife and toll away at last—  
On whom, so calm their rest and sweet,  
The sun shines not nor any heat;  
Give me with these at length to be,  
And send me here what pleaseth Thee."

A long silence followed the last sweet note, and then Mehitable bustled in, and tea was ready.

"Well, when am I going in to look at your

doings in the fore-room. Mrs. Dick?" asked the deacon, as his chair was rolled away from the table.

"Very soon, father," replied Harry, cheerily. "I am going now to finish my preparations. Mehitable, you will come pretty soon, won't you?"

"Just as soon as I've done up the dishes, and I can rattle them off in no time, if I set out."

"Hope you'll rattle some more out'n the store when you've smashed all these," suggested the former, with a grim smile, which, with the jocose remark, proved him to be in a state of unwonted hilarity.

But it was nearly two hours more before Dick appeared in the living room, as this kitchen of ceremony was called, and announced that all was now ready, and he had come to wheel his father's chair into the fore-room where Harriett awaited him.

"I'd most forgot about it. It's about bedtime, ain't it?" disingenuously replied the deacon, who had done nothing but watch and listen for an hour past. But as his chair was wheeled into the parlor and the door softly closed behind him, all affectation of indifference vanished, and Deacon Weston came as near profanity as ever in his life, for he exclaimed, "Good Lord, deliver us!" and did not mean to quote the litany.

No wonder he was surprised. What was this place into which he had entered by the familiar door leading to his own kitchen? Not the fore room, whose staid and comfortless arrangement was so familiar and so uncongenial to his eyes.

A heavy curtain screened off nearly all the space before him, and about him lay almost total darkness, through which the voice of an unseen singer rang merrily out:

"O sing me a carol blithe and free,  
And fit for our Christmas morn;  
For the world is as cold as the world can be,  
Though its Lord on this day was born.  
'Tis a wintry time for the rich and poor,  
And who shall be turned from a Christian's door?  
For 'twas Winter-time for the rich and poor  
When the shepherds came to the stable-door."

"Yes, Winter-time," went on the voice, speaking out of the darkness. "But the shepherds forgot the cold and misery of the frosty night, for they had seen the Angels, and they told them how the Glory of God had appeared on earth, and Peace and Good will were to reign among men. And when they asked whence should this Glory and Peace come to sinful men, they were told from the Cradle of the Babe of Bethlehem, and they might go and worship there. So, through the cold and darkness they came, the angel guiding them, past the houses of the rich and comfortable, past the door of the inn where was no room, until they came to the cave where were stabled the ox and the ass, and there, in a lowly manger bed, they found a little Baby."

At the word, the curtains slid softly aside, and the deacon, rubbing his eyes in astonishment, saw a grotto, its doorway hung about with icicles and snow-wreaths, its walls hidden in masses of evergreen, which also carpeted the floor.

At the back, between two spruce trees, appeared the heads of an ox and a horse, contentedly munching some hay.

A powerful yet soft light, its source unseen, flooded the place, and in the centre, in a wooden trough filled with straw, lay a sleeping child, his little hand clasping a lily. A lovely child, whose features, distinctly seen by that strange light, reminded the deacon of a boy on whom he once had rested more of pride and hope than belongs to any creature, and on whose still face he had twenty years before wept in this very room such tears as sear the eyes that weep them.

"And when the shepherds saw that Baby," went on the voice, in a tone of tender awe, "they remembered the words the angel had said to them, 'Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and lying in a manger,' and they fell on their knees and worshipped God, singing the Song of Angels."

And at the word, the unseen voice swelled into a note of ecstasy, and with it joined another deeper voice, and yet another, broken and tremulous with sobs, and all shouting:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

As the strain died away, a figure muffled from head to foot in black, glided upon the scene, and, kneeling at the foot of the cradle, bowed her face upon her hands, while the sound of suppressed sobs stirred the air and mingled like a minor strain in the melody of the speaker's voice.

"A poor lost child, wandering in the cold and darkness of that Winter night, heard the shepherds as they sang, and heard the wondrous promise of peace they proclaimed; so she, too, drew near to the lowly manger and kneeling at the Baby's feet she said in her heart, 'I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, yet forgive me, not for my own sake, but because the Babe of Bethlehem has come to bring peace upon earth. Forgive as He forgives!'"

The baby, awakened by the shepherds' song, lay cooing in his cradle, and looking about him with the dewy, lustrous eyes of infancy, the lily in his hand gently waving like the very ensign of peace.

With a swift, impulsive movement, the kneeling figure started to her feet, snatched the child to her heart, and in a moment was kneeling at the old man's feet, holding up the smiling baby, and sobbing:

"For his sake, father—for his sake!"

The deep hard sobs of age mingled with her own, and as the baby, crowing with some mysterious joy, laid his tiny grasp upon the wrinkled face bent over him, the deacon laid one hand upon that bowed head, and one upon the baby's brow, and said:



"The Lord bless and forgive you, my child, and forgive me for my hardness of heart."

Then from behind the trees glided Harry, her carols all quenched in happier tears; and after her came Dick, and knelt beside their sister, and Mehitable's angular figure appeared in the background, and her voice strangely softened by tears, exclaimed:

"Unite us in prayer, deacon; for if ever folks was called to give thanks for Christmas, it's us."

But all that the deacon found to say was:

"We thank Thee, oh, God! For this, my child, was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found!"

"And now, daughter Harriett," said he, presently, "for your reward you shall go and tell mother yourself. Dear heart! but she'll be glad."

So glad, that the shock went far to undo the mischief of that other terrible shock three years before, when it was discovered that her only daughter had fled in the night from her father's house, following the fortunes of an unworthy adventurer, whom her father had sternly forbidden his house, and never from that day to this had he mentioned her name, nor had the poor mother knowledge even of her child's life or death, honor or shame; for when a letter came, in her handwriting, the deacon sternly laid it upon the fire unopened, and watched till it was consumed. So the joy of receiving back her darling was intensified by the lifting of an awful terror from the mother's heart, and as she kissed her girl again and again, she murmured:

"I'd have forgiven you all the same, my precious; but I'm so glad you're an honest woman."

"And I'm so glad," added Harry, wiping her eyes, "that father forgave her and blessed her before he knew whether she was or not!"

"Ah! son Dick!" exclaimed the old man, as he heard her, "you did a good thing for this house when you brought this daughter into it. It's she that's done it all. Come, now, my girl, give us one more of those Christmas songs to dry up all these tears, and then we'll to bed."

"Wait until I go and take poor Daisy and Bill back to their stable," said Dick, anxious in his own way to bring down all these excited brains to every day. "Just fancy, mother, those poor creatures with their heads in at the open window, eating hay in your front-parlor as genteely as you please!"

"Lor', Mr. Dick!" interposed Mehitable, dryly, "you needn't think there's nobody round but you. I made Josh Tomkins carry them critters away just as soon as the deacon was trundled off. They're all safe."

"Then listen, and I'll sing you the best carol of all, and one of the very, very oldest!" exclaimed Harry, blithely. And, dancing the boy upon her knee, she sang, in a strong, ringing voice:

"From far away we come to you,  
The snow in the street and the wind at the door,  
To tell of glad tidings strange and true;  
Minstrels and maids stand forth on the floor.  
For as we wandered far and wide,  
The snow in the street and the wind at the door,  
What hap do you deem should us betide?  
Minstrels and maids stand forth on the floor.  
Under a bent, when the night was deep,  
The snow in the street and the wind at the door,  
There lay three shepherds tending their sheep,  
Minstrels and maids stand forth on the floor.  
"O ye shepherds, what have you seen—  
The snow in the street and the wind at the door,  
To slay your sorrow and hush your keen?"  
Minstrels and maids stand forth on the floor.  
"In an ox-stall this night we saw,  
The snow in the street and the wind at the door,  
A Babe, and a Maid without a flaw;  
Minstrels and maids stand forth on the floor.  
There was an old man there beside,  
The snow in the street and the wind at the door,  
His hair was white and his hood was wide;  
Minstrels and maids stand forth on the floor.  
And as we gazed this thing upon,  
The snow in the street and the wind at the door,  
These twain knelt down to the little One,  
Minstrels and maids stand forth on the floor.  
And a marvelous song we there did hear,  
The snow in the street and the wind at the door,  
That slew our sorrow and healed our care—  
Minstrels and maids stand forth on the floor.  
News of a fair and marvelous thing;  
The snow in the street and the wind at the door,  
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell we sing!  
Minstrels and maids stand forth on the floor."

## Cherry Wagner's Secret.

A STORY OF CHRISTMAS.

By J. Esten Cooke.

CHAPTER I.

CHERRY WAGNER was standing at her small looking-glass, tying up her hair. It was Christmas morning, and the sunshine was a glory on the snow. You could see it everywhere, through the little dormer window of the little garret-room of the rambling old homestead, on the slope of the mountain. It was deep on the window-sill and the steep old roofs, on the cedars bending under it, on the fences, the ledges of rock, and the fringe of sycamores along the river.

In the fireplace a merry crackling seemed to welcome the happy season, and the ruddy glow lit up the figure of Cherry—the neatest and coziest little figure in the world, clad in a brown woolen dress, and much plumper than any partridges in this bleak season. Her cheeks were rosy, and her smiling lips like her namesakes—the cherries. Face and figure, and the very brown curls she was tying with the pink ribbons behind her white neck, seemed to have caught the glory of the sunshine and the warmth of the fire, and to throw them both quite into the background.

A twitter came at the window, and Cherry turned her head. The snow-birds she fed every morning were begging for their breakfast, and a voice from the small bed, in one corner, cried:

"Birdie! birdie!"

A youth of four or five was sitting up, with tumbled curls, rubbing his eyes and laughing.

Cherry ran to him and caught him up, hugging and kissing him, and placed him in his chair in front of the blaze. She then hastened to the window, opened it and threw out some crumbs, and, returning to baby, set about dressing him. It was quite delightful to see the motherly air with which she parted his curls, and brushed them back from the forehead, and kissed him exactly between his laughing blue eyes, laughing herself. Then she took him by the hand and led him down the narrow old staircase into a sort of hall, into which the rooms of the ground floor opened. On the wall there was a huge pair of deer antlers supporting a long rifle; a solemn old clock ticked behind the door, and Cherry, glancing around her as if she was fearful of being observed, opened the door of the old clock and looked in furtively. A smile brighter than the sunshine lit up her face, and with "Baby" she entered the breakfast-room.

There never was a more cheerful sight than the plain old breakfast-room of the plain old homestead, with its great wide fireplace and roaring hickory logs, which threw a ruddy light on every object. The whole room seemed to rejoice in it—the home-made carpet on the floor, the split-bottomed chairs around the table, the sideboard, the plates, the cups and saucers, and the old hound dozing serenely in front of the blaze.

Above all, the light and warmth fell on the wonderful Christmas-tree, which rose from its bank of evergreens on a table in one corner. The evergreen boughs were decked out with gilded stars, and candy cornucopie, and little presents of needlework for each one of the family; and peeping from the foliage was a gorgeous red-bird whose open wings hovered grandly above all these wonders. The honest Wagner family were going to have a merry Christmas, it seemed; and Baby was so much overwhelmed with excitement that he essayed to make a rush at the magical tree and capture it. Cherry cried, "No, no! Baby," and caught him up and covered him with kisses; in the midst of which two sturdy old fellows, of about sixty, came into the room—Father Wagner, as everybody called him, and Uncle Hieronymus, his bachelor brother. It was only necessary to glance at the old fellows to see that the Wagners were from Fatherland. They were big, burly Teutons, with ruddy faces and honest eyes, and three generations in America had not altered the Rhineland look in them. Only Uncle Hieronymus professing to be a philosopher and somewhat of a cynic, occasionally scowled.

Cherry ran up to them and kissed them one after the other.

"Christmas gift, father, dear! Christmas gift, uncle!"

"Kissas gift!" Baby cried, after the manner of echo.

"Christmas, nonsense!" cried Uncle Hieronymus. "I'm hungry! I want my breakfast! Come here, you young man of the name of Baby. What do you mean by making saucers of your eyes?"

Baby came to the cynic with his head turned over his shoulder, gazing at the wonderful tree, and submitted with indifference to being kissed. Being released, he made a second rush at the tree, but Cherry once more captured him and, catching him in her arms, bore him out, with intent to perform her duties as mistress of the Wagner establishment.

Father Wagner was standing in front of the fire, looking at a picture on the wall—a plain photograph of a middle-aged dame, in a plain walnut frame. The face was smiling and motherly, but his own was very sad as he looked at it.

"Another Christmas and no Martha, brother," said Father Wagner, sighing. "It is harder and harder to do without her."

"And without Harry, too," said Hieronymus, looking at another picture opposite—that of a bright-faced young fellow of about twenty, also a photograph. "Everybody seems to forget Harry, but I remember him."

He ejaculated the words with a grim expression, rubbing his knees in the chimney corner, where he was seated. Father Wagner's ruddy face suddenly grew stern and hard.

"So that picture is hanging there yet," he said in a low voice. "It is not taken down."

"Certainly, it is there!" growled Uncle Hieronymus, knitting his brows, "and it shall stay!"

"What right has it to be there?" cried Father Wagner, in sudden wrath. "What right had that boy to disgrace an honest family, and make us blush at his bearing the name of Wagner?"

"All nonsense! I don't blush! What, if Harry was wild—he was not bad!"

Father Wagner's face grew sterner than before. "You do not know, brother," he said, in a low, deep voice; "he not only brought shame on his family by his wild ways—he did more—he disgraced us and has ruined us."

His voice faltered, and almost a groan mingled with the words.

"Don't believe it! What do you mean? You can't turn me against Harry!"

"He forged!" It was not only drink and cards—I could have borne that. He forged Wharton's name to a check for two thousand dollars! I gave a deed of trust on the farm to have it hushed up, and Wharton notified me that he will sell us out in March!"

Uncle Hieronymus sat like a figure of stone. An acute pain might be read on his lips and knit brows. Then he burst forth suddenly, with immense wrath and in strident tones:

"I don't believe a word of it! It is a lie of Wharton's! He is a skindint, and for little I will wring his neck!"

"It is true!" groaned Father Wagner.

"Truth or lie, it makes no difference! I, for one, don't mean to forget my boy, or turn against him! He is dead—that settles all scores; dead, saving his comrades in that mine in Colorado! No matter what he did, he was my Harry!"

There was something sublime in the exultation of Uncle Hieronymus. He had not known this fatal charge against Harry before. The poor boy had fallen into bad company; had become dissipated and contracted gaming debts which his father had been compelled to pay; then father and son quarreled and parted. The boy had wandered away and was lost sight of until the intelligence of his death in the mines came; and it was only after his departure that Father Wagner had been informed of the forgery, and given the deed of trust which was now to ruin him.

It was a sad discussion for this bright Christmas morning, but the appearance of breakfast put an end to it. Cherry came in with the coffee-pot, and a grinning maiden followed with smoking dishes, and after family devotions, which Father Wagner read gravely from a huge Lutheran book of prayers, they all sat down and breakfasted. Over the meal Baby presided, flourishing his spoon in his high chair, but Cherry was the soul of everything. Such a sunshine beamed from her rosy face, and such a rush of laughter mingled with her voice whenever she spoke, that Father Wagner quite forgot his depression, and even the cynic Hieronymus melted, and did not growl more than three times during the whole repast.

The time for Cherry's breakfast seemed not to have come yet. She was busy arranging a waiter on which she placed choice bits from every dish on the table. Having fixed the whole to her satisfaction, she looked at the waiter approvingly, and taking it up carried it into the room across the passage.

In a small bed there, beside a cheerful fire, lay a boy of about eight. He was thin and white, and his eyes had a very sad expression; but at sight of Cherry his face lit up with a tender smile. "I've brought your breakfast, Willie!" cried the girl, in her cheery voice, and she placed the waiter on the bed beside him.

"You are so good, sister," the boy said, affectionately. "I wonder what makes everybody so kind and good to me."

"Good gracious, what a question!" cried Cherry, laughing. "Because we love you—"

"And I am a sick boy—oh! I wish I could get well, sister."

"You'll soon be well now, dear," she said, propping him up with pillows, and kissing him. "There now, dear, eat your breakfast—but I quite forgot! Christmas gift, Willie!"

The boy put his thin arms around her neck, and, drawing the rosy face down to his own pale, little one, kissed her tenderly.

"I wish I had something to give you, sister," he murmured. "And if somebody would only give me the Christmas gift I want."

"What do you want, dear?"

The dreamy eyes of the sick boy seemed to be looking thousands of miles away.

"I want big brother!" he said, half in a whisper. Cherry turned away her head, and her bosom heaved suddenly, as if there was a weight upon it.

"Oh! if only big brother would come back!" murmured the boy, with tears in his eyes. "I think of him all the time, but most at Christmas. He was so good to me, and I loved him so—how could I help loving him? He used to play with me—on the floor sometimes, big man as he was—and often I lay awake for hours and hours, sister, thinking of him and wanting him!"

The voice of the sick boy faltered, and his eyes swam. He seemed to be looking at something beyond the walls of the room.

"There's another thing I think of—what I read in that paper, sister," he went on, in a low, hushed voice. "I read it over and over, and I know it by heart. You know where it was—the name of the place was Sangre de Cristo, and it was in a country called Colorado. There was a gold mine, and the water got into it and was filling it fast, and some men were down there, and somebody had to help them."

The boy's face flushed slowly; he seemed to be looking upon the very scene.

"Nobody would go," he went on in the same faint, awestruck voice, but a man came running and jumped in the bucket that had a rope to it, and said, 'I'll go down!' and it was brother!"

He sobbed and shook, and would not stop, in spite of all that the girl could do to quiet him.

"It was Brother Harry, and he went down in the deep mine, hundreds and hundreds of feet down, where it was dark and the water was rushing—and he got the poor men out and staid last—and never came back! It was all in the paper!—they called him 'The Hero, Harry Wagner!'"

The boy stopped, sobbing convulsively, and Cherry, almost crying too, could only hold him close with his head upon her bosom, and tell him over and over that it was wrong to excite himself so.

"I can't help it, sister! How can I help crying for brother?" he faltered, with a look of hopeless sadness in the eyes turned up to her.

"But you mustn't think of this on Christmas Day, Willie; it makes you so sorrowful; and you know it is our duty to be happy at Christmas! There, there, dear; don't cry. Look how bright the sunshine is! I do believe that cedar is going to break down under the snow! There are the snowbirds hopping about and looking for something to eat. What funny little fellows! Do you know, Willie, they come to my window regularly every morning for their crumbs, and you just ought to see them how they fight—the little wretches!"

Cherry laughed so merrily as she described the scene that the sick boy forgot his troubles, and a faint smile came to his face.

"Now eat your breakfast, dear; it is getting cold," she said; and she went back to her duties in the breakfast-room.

It was the habit of this good Lutheran family to go to church on Christmas mornings and, leaving Uncle Hieronymus to look after the children, father and daughter set out on horseback for the meeting-house, some miles distant. They were not in reality father and daughter—Father Wagner and Cherry. She and Baby were the children of a poor cousin who had died some years before; and as their mother was also dead, Father Wagner had adopted them. After a while he seemed to have forgotten that they were not really his children—

and as to Cherry, she was not only the joy of the whole household, but its autocrat.

"You are growing very tall, daughter," said Father Wagner, as they struggled through the snowdrifts in the narrow mountain road. Then, he added, with a musing look: "I am afraid you will marry and go away from me some day."

"Marry! Indeed I won't, father, dear!" cried Cherry.

"You are nearly nineteen—maids marry at that age," quoth the old fellow, sadly. "And then something might happen."

He was thinking of the deed of trust, and looked much depressed; but Cherry only replied, with her eyes dancing:

"What could happen? Besides, no one would have me!"

Father Wagner shook his head.

"No fear of that. You might pick from a dozen." He stopped and suddenly added: "What do you say to Dick Wharton? He was wild, but people say he has reformed, and he might suit you."

Was Father Wagner thinking that a marriage between the girl and young Wharton would put an end to all trouble about the deed? Wharton, senior, was wealthy, and his son was his idol. As a business point of view the match was everything to be desired, and young Wharton had been one of Cherry's most assiduous suitors. She had flatly refused him, and did not seem to have changed her mind now.

"I would not marry him if my life depended upon it, father!" she cried.

Her face flushed and she spoke passionately.

"He was the cause of—the cause of—you know—but for him, our Harry—"

She stopped and burst into tears; and for some distance they rode on in silence. What Cherry meant to say in these broken words was that Harry Wagner had been led into evil habits by Dick Wharton; and it was plain that Father Wagner understood her.

"Well, well, daughter," he said, with a sigh, "we'll say no more about it. And, to be plain, I am of your way of thinking about that young man."

After this no more was said, and they soon came to the church—a small stone building half-covered with ivy in a hollow of the mountain. The service was already in progress and ended in an hour; whereupon Father Wagner and Cherry went about greeting their neighbors and friends. There was always some news to hear at these friendly gatherings, and Father Wagner was informed of the accident which had befallen young Wharton. He had been thrown from his horse and seriously injured, perhaps fatally. On their way back home father and daughter spoke of the accident. Cherry looked quite sad.

"I am sorry I spoke of him so unkindly," she said, "but they say he will recover; I am very glad."

They were passing directly beneath a great holly tree which leaned from a rocky ledge above them. The scarlet berries in the deep green foliage were dazzling in the sunshine. Cherry pointed to them and said:

"Here is what you wanted, father dear, to dress the pictures."

"You mean—your mother's picture," he said, in a gloomy voice.

"Oh father! father dear!—both pictures—for love of me!"

He had broken off a large bough of the holly covered with berries.

"You will let me, father—he loved me so—and I loved him."

Her face flushed and her eyes filled with tears.

"As you will," he said, in a low tone, with his head bowed. Cherry leaned from her saddle and placing her arm around his neck laid her cheek upon his own.

"Thank you, father!" she murmured, smiling through her tears.

The sun was sinking like a ball of fire toward the mountain as they came back to the old homestead, and the great fire was roaring in the fireplace as if in triumph. The air had grown chill and the snow-laden trees waved in the fitful gusts; but the big log fire only roared the louder and laughed as though full of the wassail of Christmas. The very red-bird perched on the Christmas-tree seemed ready to burst forth in a carol of rejoicing.

Father Wagner went in to see Willie and Baby as he always did, and Cherry was left alone with Hieronymus.

"Oh uncle, dear!" she cried, running to him, "both pictures are to be dressed!—both, uncle!"

Hieronymus granted. The holly boughs were lying on the table and he looked at them.

"So that's all arranged, is it? I meant to dress both! What do I care for anybody?"

Cherry was laughing and crying.

"I knew you had not forgotten him," she said. "Forgotten Harry? Why should I forget him?"

What do I care what people say? He was my boy, and the best boy that ever was! Wild!—harum-scarum!—what if he was? Backbiting and hating and oppressing poor people—that's respectable. But if a poor boy is thoughtless—to the dogs with him!"

Uncle Hieronymus was withering, his scorn superb. He gesticulated and scowled defiance.

"Did the preacher to-day say anything about a certain Prodigal Son? I know some people who would have set the dogs on him when he came back home—the good man fell on his neck and kissed him. There's the difference!"

Cherry ran and clasped the cynic in her arms.

"You always loved him, and he loved you dearly," she said.

Whereat the cynic, allowing himself to be embraced, retorted:

"Somebody else loved him, too, and he loved somebody!"

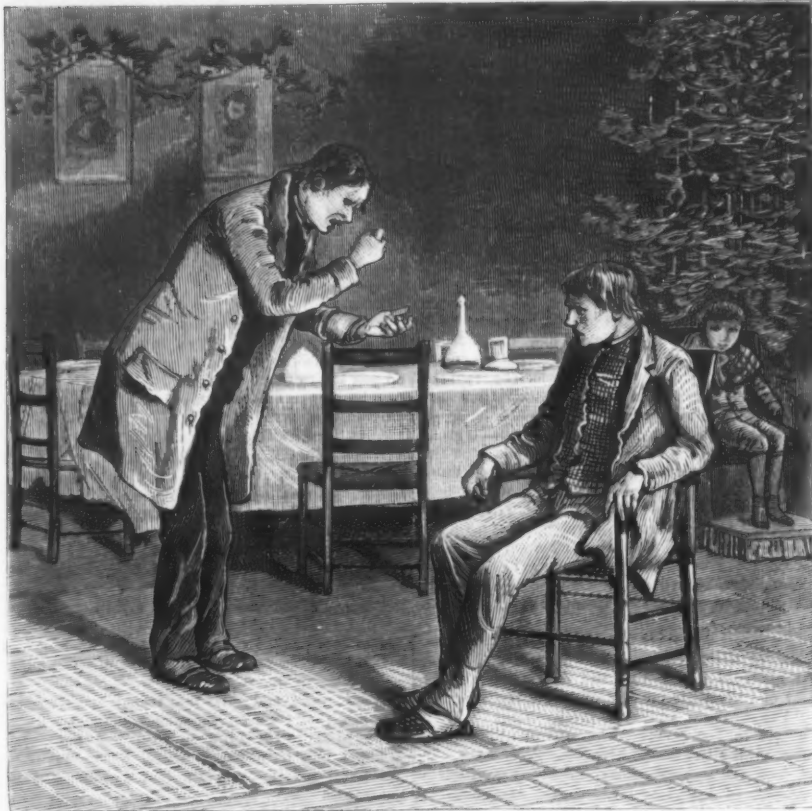
At these words Cherry grew to be the color of a red rose, and Uncle Hieronymus smiled in triumph.

"You thought I had forgot that, or never knew it! As if a man with eyes in his head could live in the same house with two such people and not see what is going on right before him!"

"Oh, uncle!"

"Come, deny it if you dare, you young slip of original sin!"





CHERRY WAGNER'S SECRET.—"I SET THAT SEAT."

"The idea!—and I only a child!"

"A child of sixteen!—and that's a diabolical age or I'm a sinner! Don't try to deceive me, young one—it's of no use. Have I said you were wrong? Do you think I blame you for loving Harry? You know you fell in love with each other, and would have been married if—if—"

Uncle Hieronymus suddenly broke down and sobbed.

"At least I won't forget him!" he suddenly cried, going straight to the table where the holly was lying. In a turn of the hand he had dressed Harry's picture, and the frank bold face looked out from a bower of evergreen and scarlet. Then he turned his back and dressed Mother Wagner's picture too—not observing that Cherry had flitted from the room to the clock without. Opening the door of the old heirloom, she took out something and hid it in her bosom, and ran back just as Uncle Hieronymus had finished his work.

"Now, that's something like," he growled, to hide his emotion. "What's the matter, young one?"

For Cherry's face was like a burst of Spring sunshine.

"I have a secret to tell you, uncle, dear!" cried the girl.

"What a face!—a secret?"

"Yes, yes, uncle!—for you only!"

She ran and hid something carefully—she had taken it from her bosom—in the evergreens, over the young man's likeness.

"What are you doing?" cried Hieronymus in a state of utter bewilderment.

"I am putting father's Christmas gift where he will find it after dinner."

Uncle Hieronymus began to tremble.

"Is the girl mad?" he cried.

"No, no, uncle, dear!—it is my secret—and you shall know it!"

## CHAPTER II.

AS the sun sank below the mountain it began to snow. First a few feathery flakes drifted slowly down; then the flakes fell closer and closer as the moments passed on; and at last a blinding wall interposed between the eye and the shadowy cedars looming up, dim and weird, against the blood-red sunset.

Father Wagner had gone out as usual to the stables to see after his stock. He never trusted his dumb family to the care of the farm-laborers, but saw in person, before nightfall, that the horses were fed and bedded, the cattle munching their fodder, thrown from the great rick over the stone fence, and the sheep under shelter and nibbling their good supply of hay from the mow above their heads. This had once been Harry's care, but now it was Father Wagner's—he would not allow Uncle Hieronymus to assist, because he was rheumatic.

Cherry's private interview with the cynic lasted but a few minutes. At the end of that time she ran out of the room, disappeared in the direction of the kitchen, and coming back to Willie's room began to dress him, for Cherry had set her heart upon having Willie at the Christmas dinner. This was not imprudent, for the boy sat up for an hour or two every day. So the girl dressed him neatly in his small Sunday suit, with warm striped stockings, put a woolen comforter around his neck, and, wrapping him in her shawl, carried him bodily into the dining-room, and sat him down in a wadded chair in the chimney-corner. Baby had already made his appearance, in full-dress, for the occasion. He was lying on the carpet in front of the fire by the old hound, and drawing on a scrap of paper a picture of a black sheep. Having put the finishing touches to this work of art, he rose and declaimed:

"Back sheep, back sheep,  
Have oo any wool?  
Yes, my mistress,  
Free bags full—!"

and Cherry, for reward, caught him up and danced him aloft until he burst into shouts of delight.

The snow was falling more and more heavily as

the old mountain-house weird voices seemed to be laughing; and suddenly a rush of wind drove the snowwall sidewise and shook the house.

Father Wagner started from his reverie and raised his head. At the same moment the fire flashed aloft in a ruddy blaze which filled the whole room with rejoicing light. The old man turned his head, and his eyes fell upon the pictures; from under the evergreens the face of his son seemed to be looking at him and smiling. Thereat the broad breast heaved and he looked away, fixing his eyes upon another object—an additional chair at the table.

"What is that?" he said, pointing to the additional chair.

Uncle Hieronymus seemed to have been waiting and burst forth.

"I set that seat!" he thundered, standing up and gesticulating. "What I want to know is this: Are we Christians or heathens? Is that Book you read from the rule to live by, or is it a lie? There's a leaf in it all about a Prodigal, who was a hard subject. He spent his substance and his father's in riotous living and was not a model for anybody. Then he went down to the gutter and fed on husks! But he came back home at last, and his father forgot all. He forgave the boy and cried over him and set him on his right hand. Are you going to be a heathen, Jacob Wagner, and not do likewise?"

Father Wagner shook, and a groan came, but he made no reply.

"Answer me!—don't sit there, dumb!" cried Hieronymus, in triumph. "You harden your heart against the boy and even scowl when people who loved him set a chair at the table to remember him by! What's the harm of that? If it gives a body pleasure to think the boy might come and sit in it—if an old boy of the name of Hieronymus Wagner is made happy by it and says to himself 'There might be a miracle, and Harry might come back—!'"

Suddenly Willie turned his head and rose to his feet, tottering and fixing his eyes upon the window.

"What is the matter, little one?" cried Father Wagner, starting up.

"There was something, somebody!—there, father!—there!"

Was it a shadow at the window, and was the wind without laughing with a wild air of triumph?

A light flashed into the room—Cherry was hastening in with the lamp; and on her face might be seen an expression of joy which lit up the room more than fire or lamplight.

"Father, dear!" she cried, setting down the lamp and running to the old man.

"Daughter!" he exclaimed, "what does this mean? Are you all mad?"

The wind or something else burst in the broad front-door, and the snow followed it. Father Wagner drew back a step, looking with wide-open eyes upon what met his sight.

A tall figure, half-covered with snowflakes was standing in the doorway—a man with a broad hat, under which could be seen a bold face, with frank eyes and heavily bearded lips—the face flushed and beseeching, but with a splendor of joy in it.

"Don't you know me, father? I was not dead—I have come back! You'll forget and forgive—won't you, father?"

He came in, trembling and gazing around him. As he advanced Father Wagner stood looking at him with a vague wonder, as if the whole scene were a dream.

"You'll forgive me, father?"

Suddenly Willie ran toward him and held up his arms, crying, "Brother Harry!"

And Harry caught him up and came to Father Wagner's side, and, still holding the child to his breast, said:

"Father!"

The single word was more eloquent than a thousand.

The stubborn will of Father Wagner broke down at once; his face was wet with tears, and in

a moment he was holding his son close and weeping over him. Suddenly, Uncle Hieronymus burst into joyful laughter.

"I always said you would come back, young man!" he cried, "and you are just in time to dine with your family. So you forged a man's name and went off and got drowned, did you? No matter! It's all the same! Hold him tight, Willie—he's a ghost, and he'll get away from you!"

To describe the joy of Hieronymus would be a vain undertaking, and that cynical philosopher struck the keynote of the general rejoicing. Harry Wagner was seated in front of the fire, in the midst of all, and the first thing he said was:

"I am not a forger, uncle; and I'm not drowned!"

"Do you mean to say it's really you, big brother?" cried Willie, quite wild with joy. He was still in the young man's arms, and Baby was on the other knee. "Then you didn't go and get drowned in that mine, as the paper said?"

"Not a bit of it, Willie," the big miner replied, laughing. "I was lost for a day and a night, as the rope broke and they had to send for another; and that's the way the story got out, I have no doubt. After a while they got me up—and, after all, it made my fortune. A great operator took a fancy to me and made me his head man—and so there's the end of that story, Willie!"

"But that forgery?"

It was Uncle Hieronymus who asked the question. His air was severe, and he waited after the manner of a judge.

"Well," Harry said, fixing his eyes with deep feeling on Father Wagner, "I never even heard of that charge until two weeks ago. Then a man who had come West from the mountain here told me of the report. It nearly ran me crazy, father!—what could it mean? It was miserable enough in me to act as I did, and quarrel with you, but to be charged with forgery!—even to have it whispered about! I did not stay at the Sangre de Cristo two days after hearing about it. I sold out everything, put the gold in my pocket, and came straight back and settled everything!"

"Ah! you settled everything!" cried Uncle Hieronymus, with sarcasm.

"In half an hour, uncle! There was no trouble about it. I learned that the forged check had old Wharton's name on it—and then I remembered all about it. Dick Wharton gave me the check one day, when I was going to town, and asked me to get the money for it; and I did get the money and paid it to him the next day. He forged his father's name and, like a wretch, left me under the charge. I made him confess it—or, rather, he did so of his own accord when he thought he was going to die. He had been thrown from his horse—it was nearly a week ago—and he signed the confession on my promise to tear it up when I had shown it to you, father. Well, that's all—except that I looked around and met Cherry in the grove, and gave her the papers. She ought to have them somewhere, as she's a business young woman. I say the papers, father, because your deed of trust is with the other. It is my Christmas gift!"

Cherry had darted to the picture and taken from the evergreens what was concealed there. It was a package and Harry opened it, and held up two papers, one of which he gave to Father Wagner, who read it and returned it.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed. "I never could believe it in my heart, Harry!"

"Well, that's done with now, father! As to the deed of trust, that cost nothing! As you gave it for a debt which I never contracted, old Wharton returned it, and begged me to say nothing of it. I had money enough. Your bad boy has come back home with something to spare, and I hope you'll not find fault with him in future, father!"

Suddenly Uncle Hieronymus advanced and spoke:

"There is only one guarantee for such a wretch's good behavior! Bachelors are not re-



CHERRY WAGNER'S SECRET.—"A TALL FIGURE WAS STANDING IN THE DOORWAY."—SEE PAGE 279.



spectable—I am an exception, but there are few. It will be necessary for you to marry if you wish to be received back into this respectable family. Are you prepared to fulfill this condition, young man?"

Harry Wagner blushed from his chin to the roots of his shaggy curls over his forehead, but it was easy to see that it was a blush of happiness.

"Are you prepared to undergo the ordeal?" demanded Hieronymus, severely.

"I am, if I can find anybody to marry me!"

"Look around—do you see any one you think will have you?"

Harry Wagner started up and looked at Cherry with an expression on his bold face that was dazzling.

"Will you, Cherry?" he said, "but you—you have already promised!"

And before Cherry could resist he put his arms around her and, turning to Father Wagner, said:

"I am engaged to be married to Cherry—may I have her, father?"

There never was before, and probably never will be again, such a Christmas at the home of the Wagner family. They had at one end of the dinner-table a huge roast turkey, a round of

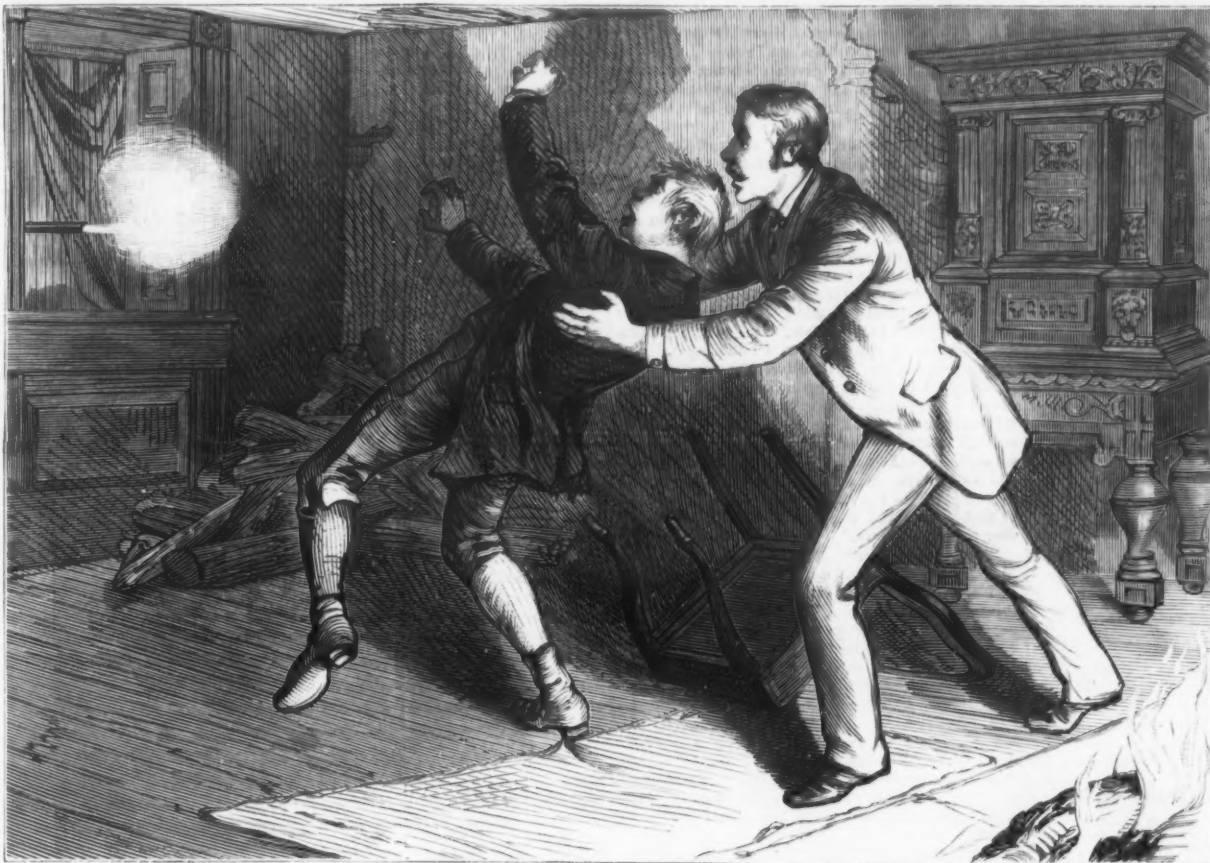
beef at the other; chine and ducks at the side; a mighty pudding and beer and home-made wine. And Willie had his seat beside big brother, next the fire; and Baby grew wild at the appearance of the plum pudding; and when all was cleared away, and the fire heaped high once more with logs, Cherry—blushing still with her overflowing

happiness—lit the tapers on the Christmas-tree, and Baby's eyes were suddenly saucers, and the red-bird nearly burst into a flood of song. As to the wind and snow without, they were quite forgotten. Were not the very cattle housed and fed that night, by Harry himself, before Father Wagner went to feed them, and the very halters

tied in the old knot that Harry tied, seeing that Father Wagner had fallen into a great wonder? But now the wonder was turned to joy, for there was his lost son before him, with Baby on one knee, and Willie packed upon the other, and one hand of the bearded miner holding secretly the hand of Cherry.

simpler taste prevails, the little Babe of Bethlehem is represented alone, lying on straw, and lights and lace and flowers surround the effigy.

Before the crib or Child is always a place for offerings, and when Christmas comes, the priest day by day takes the offerings and goes with some of the children to distribute them among the needy



JOE O'HARA'S CHRISTMAS EVE.—“I'M KILT,” GROANED THE LAD, AND FELL INTO O'HARA'S ARMS.”—SEE PAGE 282.

### A Christmas Crib in the Chapel of a Convent.

IN Catholic convents and institutions, and in many of the Catholic churches even in this country, part of the Christmas decoration is the “Crib,” a representation of the grotto of Bethlehem, with figures of Mary and the Infant Saviour, and St. Joseph, and also the legendary ox and ass, who figure as spectators in all the early popular accounts. These are always seen; sometimes, too, the three wise men with their retinue, their camels and attendants, are seen approaching, guided by the miraculous star, and one of the three is always black. The children and the young are intensely interested in the whole affair, and in a convent chapel the good Sisters use all their taste and means to produce a most vivid effect. Women's deft fingers and sense of the beautiful are full of resources, and the shimmer of lace and the candle-light falling on glittering ornaments, the rich exotics borrowed from the hothouses of friends, the costly fabrics garnered up in the long fleeting years, all help to make it an impressive sight. Where a



NUNS DRESSING UP THE “CRIB” FOR CHRISTMAS IN THE CHAPEL OF A CONVENT.



and the poor. The offerings are not all money. Children are encouraged to give up some of their treasured presents as offerings to the poor, and these are sold at an impromptu auction to obtain money for the work of charity.

A strange medley is thus sometimes seen before the figure of the Child—*toys, delicacies, books and playthings.*

Once a good Sister coming in found a child seated there, helping herself to the dainties with great serenity. The Sister rebuked the young offender and endeavored to impress it with a sense of the enormity of its course. "I always offered him some," the child whimpered, "but it would not take any."

### CHRISTMAS EVE.

COMES softly echoed down the ages,  
The song the shepherds heard of old.  
Like strain of sweetest choral music  
Along cathedral arches rolled.

First heard on earth in nightly vigils,  
On lone and dark Judean hill,  
The chorus since of countless millions,  
Of peace on earth, to men goodwill.

Oh, happy eve of day most sacred,  
Of day most blest in noon or morn—  
Of day that marks time's greatest era  
When Christ the Prince of Peace was born.

A light to shine till every nation  
On Christmas Eve the anthem sung,  
And every language, race and people,  
The bells of Merry Christmas ring.

Till Winter winds and Summer zephyrs,  
In Northern wilds and Austral climes,  
Shall bear in wide, concentric circles  
Around the world the Christmas chimes.

### Joe O'Hara's Christmas Eve.

By CORRY CAREW.

"AND so you're the new landlord, avic?" demanded the Widow Dempsey, the buxom proprietress of the "Brian Boroihme" shebeen, which, as everybody knows, is five miles the Galway side of Oughterard and the snuggest shebeen in Connemara—a dapper little gentleman, attired in a homespun ulster, to whom she extended a glass of *poteen* to keep "betune his shinny an the cowl."

The gentleman had just arrived from Galway by the "lobster car," that elongated jaunting-car that plies between Westport and Galway, thanks to the enterprise and *clan* of the late Mr. Bianconi, and his *impedimenta*, consisting of half a dozen portmanteaus, a gun-case, a set of fishing-rods and a bundle of canes, littered the floor, and even incumbered the solitary mahogany table and the three horsehair-covered chairs of which the parlor of the Brian Boroihme so proudly boasted.

"An' so you're the new landlord?" repeated Mrs. Dempsey, eying the ulster-enveloped little gentleman sidewise, much as a magpie would ogle an empty marrowbone.

"I'm the new landlord," replied the diminutive gentleman, drawing himself up to his full height. "See that now!" observed the landlady. "Faix, an' it's cruel disappointed the boys'll be."

"Why so, madam?" demanded the little gentleman.

"Begorra, thin, yer that small they might as well be shootin' at a jacksnipe."

Now, whether it was the comical look in the face of the widow or the effects of the *poteen*, or a combination the outcome of both, it has not been exactly determined, but certain it is that the little gentleman burst into as loud and as honest a laugh as ever came out of the mouth of a man—ay, even twice his size.

"That's a good chance for me," he joyously cried.

"Shure enough, sir," responded Mrs. Dempsey, respectfully, for bravery is ever respected in Ireland, and the jovial way that Mr. Joseph O'Hara—for that is his name—took this somewhat startling announcement instantly placed him high on the pedestal of the widow's favor.

And let me tell you that Mrs. Dempsey was a person of considerable consequence in Ballyma vourneen. She was known to be "snug," and to be on the best possible terms with the manager of the Hibernian Bank at Oughterard. She was the possessor of two cows, a score of pigs, and her prairie-patch was the largest in the barony.

In addition to all this, she had a "lase" of fifty acres at Knockroghery, and when the bog and the boulders were taken out of it the "bit o' land" was worth a clear £5 per acre, while Mrs. Dempsey paid but thirty shillings. She owned two horses and a colt, and a couple of jaunting cars, one for everyday work about the country, the other for hire and for conveying her across the bog on Sunday to Mass at Ballybriery, where Father Tom O'Mulligan once in every week "wolloped the devil."

Now Mr. Joseph O'Hara was the owner, in fee, of a small property adjoining Ballyma vourneen, having been bequeathed the same by his uncle, a very thrifty little attorney, who practiced in the Recorder's Court, in Green Street, Dublin, and who took the estate from a needy Western gentleman, to whom he had advanced a few hundred pounds at an interest ranging from one hundred and fifty to two hundred per cent. on every renewal of the straps or bills.

To do Joe O'Hara justice, he was as generous, as plucky, and as jovial a little fellow as ever trod in shoe leather, and, although he was told that by currying favor with his uncle in the time to come all the old man's wealth would be his, he indignantly spurned the idea of squirming towards dead men's shoes, and made his own small way in the grocery business in St. Andrew Street, Dublin; and if he had been less fond of hunting, shooting and fishing, and more attached to sugar and figs and raisins, he would have been on the high road to a seat in the Town Council, and perhaps to a J. P. ship.

"Arrah, thin, what brings ye down here on Christmas Eve, of all days in the year, sir?" asked the widow, as she dusted one of the horse-

hair-covered chairs with her apron. "I suppose ye're goin' over to Mither Joyce's, of Killesbandra? I hear there's to be heaps of divarshin beyant?"

"Faith, I wish I was, ma'am," replied Joe, with a light laugh, "but I've given up going to places that I'm not invited to. I'm only a small grocer in Dublin, and my heart never aches because I am only a small grocer."

"Ye'll not be afther thinkin' of stoppin' at Derrylossary?" this being the name of the O'Hara property.

"That's where I'm going, ma'am."

"Musha, shure, the 'ould house is fallin' to pieces, an' it's that damp that the rats has the newralgy and the mice is goin' about on crutches. In airnest, sir, shure yer not thinkin' of goin' there?"

"I have come down from Dublin for that express purpose. The fact is," added Joe, who was glad to open his heart to the widow, "the only invitation for Christmas I cared to accept I didn't get. I'm a bachelor, ma'am," with a facetious wink. "My landlady—I live in lodging in North Great George's Street—was anxious to spend her Christmas, of all places in the world, on the Hill of Howth; the servant wanted to spend hers on the Bog of Allen; so, as the Yankees say, I resolved to clear out, and here I am. A young man that does business for me stuck to the shop. I'll want another drop of that *poteen* and a car to take me and my traps over to Derrylossary."

"Here's the sperits, anyway, and I'll see that Murty Finn catches the horse; but if ye'll be sed be me, yer honor, ye'll stop where ye are. Don't think, Mither O'Hara," added the widow, growing as red as a peony, "that I want for to make money out av ye, for glory be to God, I never axed a halfpenny from any lone crature that had for to spend Christmas in this house, nor me poor husband, Peter Dempsey, that's dead an' goin' these six years—may the heavens be his bed this night, amin!"—lavin' me a murner at thirty-won—"God be good to him." And his widow reverently raised her eyes to the smoke-browned ceiling, which was gayly festooned with hams, hanks of onions, pigs' cheeks and fitches of bacon.

"Mrs. Dempsey," said O'Hara, "I'm deeply grateful to you for your hospitable intentions, and I tell you that I won't leave the country without spending a night under this roof as your guest, but I'm resolved upon putting up at Derrylossary; it's a sort of notion I have, and when I take a thing into my head it's hard to drive it out. So tell Murty to catch the horse, and if ye'll be good enough to step as far as the door and show me the road, I'll walk on and the luggage can follow."

The widow, after some further argumentation, slipped from behind the lattened bar and to the door, as requested. "That's the road straight forinist ye, sir; ye'll folly it till ye come to the crossroads, an' take the won that lades be the bog. Ye could take a short cut over the bog, but, bein' a stranger, ye couldn't humor the bog, so it's safer for ye for to skirt it. Ye'll come to a boren—"

"What's that, Mrs. Dempsey?"

"A *boren* is a little road or lane, sir, and take the *boren* right up to yer own gate. There's no gate but a pair of stone pillars, wid road stones on the top, like marks—whitewashed. The house is in the elm-trees, hid from the road."

Joe O'Hara thanked her, and was for moving off, when she recalled him.

"Does Dinny Blake know yer comin', sir?"

"You mean the caretaker?"

"Yes, sir."

"I wrote to him."

"Dinny is a hard man, Mither O'Hara, and no one in the country has a good word for him. Don't trust him farther nor ye could throw a bull be the tail. He was ould O'Hara's own pet, an' the boys would have sent him below long ago if it wasn't for Father Tom."

"I'm sorry to get this account of him, ma'am," said O'Hara, "especially as he has the half-year's rent in the heel of his fist; but I believe every man to be honest until I find him to be a rogue."

Joe once more thanking the widow for her hospitality and friendly counsel, took to the road, and as he disappeared in the distance, Mrs. Dempsey muttered, as she turned into the shebeen, "He's a nice man, and a nice-mannered man, and I hope he'll not let Dinny Blake put his comether on him. Wisha, but it's a quare notion goin' to an impty ould house, that's fallin' to pieces, for to spend Christmas. Now for Murty an' the horse."

In due time the red-headed urchin, whose tattered raiment of what had once been corduroy, was beguiled from the bog, and the quadruped duly attached to the rickety jaunting-car through the medium of *suggowans* or hay-ropes.

"Be the mortal frost, ma'am," observed Murty, as he gazed admiringly at the pile of luggage, "he's got more boxes nor the lord!" referring to the Earl of Oughterard, a plain, quiet-going old gentleman, whose *impedimenta* usually consisted of a dressing-case, a single portmanteau and an umbrella.

The car, groaning under its unaccustomed load, had scarcely jingled from the door when two men hastily entered.

These men were attired in heavy frieze coats, patched here and there with broadcloth. They wore knee-breeches of corduroy, blue knitted stockings and brogues—the latter, by the quantity of brown clay clinging to them, announcing a tramp across the neighboring bog.

"Wasn't that the landlord?" demanded the taller of the two.

"Yis, Mick Donovan, it was," replied the widow, eying him earnestly.

"I sed so," observed the shorter man, who was none other than the Dinny Blake, against whom Mrs. Dempsey had warned O'Hara.

"We seen him beyant from Clash, Mrs. Dempsey," said Dinny.

"Faix, thin, but yer takin' his visit mighty aisy. Do ye know he's gone over to the house?"

"Let him go. Gimme a glass av sperits," was Dinny's rejoinder.

"I'm thinkin' yer not for stoppin' at Derrylossary, Dinny Blake," said the widow, as she filled a couple of naggins with whisky.

"Amn't I? Ho, ho! Eh, Mick?"

"If ye are, ye ought to be over beyant to welkim him."

"Arrah, for what? D'ye know what yer talkin' about, at all, at all? Welkim! It's a cowl ind av a welkim his ould thief av an uncle used for to give me whin I gothered the rints an' brought him to him, every fardin'. Welkim! Bedad, it's more kicks nor halfpence I got. Let the nevy welkim himself!" and the man grinned insolently.

"This is a rale daycent man, anyhow," observed Mrs. Dempsey, "and as well-behaved; an' it's yer business, Dinny, for to make the place as snug for him as ever ye can."

"Divil a snug I'll make it for him."

"Mebbe, it's *warm* ye'll make it for him," laughed Mick Donovan.

"Ay, an' sooner nor he thinks."

The two men having ordered fresh naggins of whisky, retreated into the corner where the table stood and conversed in whispers.

Mrs. Dempsey pretended to take no notice of their movements, but, nevertheless, she was all eyes and ears.

"Them two is up to sumthin' bad in regard to O'Hara. I'll go bail Dinny's at the beck av Donovan, and it was Donovan that shot Mither Burke, of Gortnalough, as shure as I'm a livin' woman. Bedad, that's a gun under Donovan's cotamore. If there's not bad work in the air this blessed and holy Christmas Eve, may I never see glory!"

The men kept ordering and drinking whisky till the fiery liquid commenced to tell upon them.

"It's nearly time for to be goin'," observed Donovan, as he glanced up at the clock that so merrily ticked in the corner in a very bower of holly and ivy decorations. "Is that clock right, Mrs. Dempsey?"

"It's aequal to the wan at the post-office beyant at Ough'erard. What are ye up to, boys?" Mrs. Dempsey asked this question in a free-and-easy tone and in the most ordinary way; but the two men almost reeled under the question. They glanced at one another, then at her; then Dinny Blake replied, as if the words were weighted with lead and difficult to drag upwards:

"Nothin'. I'm goin' on the spree. What are you goin' for to do, Mick?"

"I was thinkin' av goin' to confeshun, no less," grinned the other. "Is Father Tom in his box to-night, Mrs. Dempsey?"

"It wud be well for yez both—and, mind me words," said the widow, with considerable intensity, "if yez were goin' to confession this blessed and holy night, for it's many a long day sence yez bint a knee to the great God, an'—"

"Arrah, come along ould o' this!" cried Dinny, catching Donovan's arm, "it's wud the soupers ye ought to be, Mrs. Dempsey, over beyant at Clifden," and, lugging Donovan to the door, the two went out into the gray light, for night was prep'ring to spread her sable mantle over the earth, and already had the distant mountains become enshrouded, while the great bogs loomed up like gigantic black shadows.

"Oh, if I could only get a word with O'Hara, to warn him—to tell him that this black-hearted villain, Dinny, is bent on destroyin' him! Yes," and the widow paced up and down the little parlor a prey to the most violent agitation. "I saw blood!—Holy Mary, mother of God!—blood in their villainous eyes—murder! Yes, murder! They must be stopped! Which way have they gone?"

She rushed to the door—listened.

"Ay, I hear their voices! Shure enough, it's for Derrylossary they're bound! He'll be shot to-night! Mary Dempsey, that man's death will be on yer soul if ye don't try for to save him! Who cares if the place is gutted whin I come back—there's a life for to be saved! I know it, I feel it! Let him burn the Brian Boroihme, if they like. I must get to Derrylossary before the black-hearted murderers! Of all nights in the year, there's not a soul for to remain here while I'm gone, and there's forty pounds worth of sperits in—to the divile wud it! Here goes."

Hastily arraying herself in a blue frieze cloak, with its capacious hood so peculiar to Connemara, she blew out the two dipt candles that illuminated the shebeen and, turning the key in the door, thrust it into her pocket, and was speeding across the bog almost ere she realized the resolution so rapidly arrived at.

"It's more nor four miles," she muttered, "I'll do it in less than an hour! Anyhow, I'll be there afore *them*!"

The night was pitch-dark, and to any save a practiced foot the bog was a succession of perils. To Mrs. Dempsey every inch of the path had been known from infancy, and she sped along as though on the high road at bright noon-day.

"What light is that?" she asked herself, as a twinkle as of a falling star appeared in the gloomy sable. "What can it be? I'm afther passin' Teddy Mulvany's turf-clump, that's two mile from the house to a perch. Ah! I have it; it's in the polias barracks, at Clobogue, and—oh! my God!"

In watching the light she missed her footing, and, with a great cry for help, went down, down into the clammy ooze of a boghole, an ooze that sucked with the horrible power of the maelstrom, or the devil-fish.

Joe O'Hara having lighted his meershaum pipe, marched gayly along the road leading to Derrylossary.

"What a lot of stories I'll have for Alderman Finnigan," he thought, "of my Christmas in an ould tumble-down house. Perhaps it's haunted. By Crickey! that would be a Christmas Eve. My Christmas Eve in a Haunted Room!" What a title for a magazine article. What a jolly old girl that Mrs. Dempsey is. Old! why she's not more nor forty. She doesn't think much of my steward. I suppose that's what he is. These country people are all down on one another, anyway. I suppose he'll have the hard word for Mrs. D. The thing is to listen to counsel on both sides and reserve decision. Still, from what she says about this fellow, I'm afraid I'm in the wrong box for my £150.

Following the directions given him, O'Hara struck the *boren*.

Now for the whitewashed pillars—ah! here they are—not much of an entrance to your an-

cestral seat, my Lord de O'Hara," he exclaimed, aloud; "but this is all the English misrule has left you. Your retainers are—but, ha! I hear a voice—it is from the clouds; the rocks baying a deep-mouthed welcome as I draw near home. Eh! my Lord Byron, wilt thou permit the paraphrase. "By the Dick," he added, "that rookery is something, anyhow. I wouldn't ask a better roof to sleep under, or a sweeter lullaby. There's something internally respectable about a rookery. Ah! old boys, I take off me hat to you. I salute you—I love you like pie." Joe was in the highest spirits. The novelty, the freedom, the loneliness, the *abandon* of the situation just suited his mood and as he traversed the elm-lined avenue, grass-grown and full of the music of the dead leaves, he could have shouted in the exuberance of his spirits.

"Now, this sort of thing would make any other fellow melancholy as Jacques—but I like it. I hope Dinny Blake has plenty of rashers and eggs ready to pop into the pan, and I have my own flask. I don't see any sign of light or life. I suppose the front of the house is at the back. Ha! ha!" He moved round through the rank grass which wetted him up to his knees, until he reached a small door. He tried the latch, which instantly yielded. Pushing the door open, he rapped loudly with his knuckles. Then he knocked at the panel, and then he shouted "Dinny Blake!" at the top of his voice.

"The fellow has gone to some crossroads or other to meet me, and has missed me. Luckily, I have my box of wax matches here; so, by your leave, Mither Dinny, I'll inspect my own premises."

He struck a match and entered a room on his left. The ceiling of this apartment had fallen in, and the boards of the room above it showed enormous gaps, while the flooring of the room into which he now passed had entirely disappeared.

"I'll be hanged if the scoundrel hasn't made firewood of the floor," cried O'Hara, half angrily. "A joke's a joke, but this is carrying a joke a little too far!"

He now turned to the right, lighting a fresh match.

"Pshaw! the room is converted into a potato store, and onions, too. Faugh! I suppose the old cove lives up-stairs." O'Hara groped along the passage, the plastering of the walls giving at every touch and falling to the floor with heavy thuds. When he had gone a little way, he struck a match.

"I'll be hanged if this isn't outrageous, the staircase pulled down," holding out the light and peering upwards into the darkness. "Gone for firewood!" He was still peering upwards when a sound, directly above, startled him.

"Good God! is that a face?" he muttered, half-aloud, and as he spoke the match burned out.

He quickly lit another, then half a dozen, so as to increase the illumination. This brighter light served but to render darkness visible.

"Hi! I say. Hi! above there! Helloa!"

No response.

"I'll swear on a pile of Bibles that I saw a woman's face, and a very white one." Then, raising his voice, "Will you be good enough to bring a light here? I am Mr. O'Hara, from Dublin, the owner of this confounded tumble-down old shanty!"

Again he had recourse to his match-box, and, passing the gaping stairway, he penetrated a large hall, the boards of which had also been ripped up. He entered a room on the right; it was empty and boardless. He tried a door on his left; it was locked.

"Aha! I've earthed the old fox at last," chuckled O'Hara, as, applying his heel to the lock, he kicked open the portal.

The new-lighted match showed him a large room, furnished with a bed, a table, a rickety sofa, a few crazy chairs, and an old brass-bound *armoire*. Espying a brass candlestick, with the remains of a candle in the socket, O'Hara leaped at it, and, having secured more substantial light, made a deliberate survey of the apartment. A pile of wood lay heaped against the wall in one corner, from which O'Hara selected two or three inviting-looking logs, which he flung on the embers of a fire not yet quite extinct. Then he rummaged the drawers of the *armoire* till he found a couple of candles.

"So far, so good!" he exclaimed. "Now for that white face!"

Taking the lighted candles with him, he again set forth on his explorations, and traversed several empty rooms, the flooring of which had all been removed. "I must see if there's a back staircase anywhere, for there are no visible means of reaching the upper story that I can make out."

With the candles sweating and covering him with foul-smelling grease, he made a most careful examination of the premises, but the house proved to be of the pattern of most Irish country houses of its size, two-storied, with but a single stairway; the sitting-rooms being on the ground floor and the bedrooms on the upper.

"I suppose I must wait till daylight or till that boy Murty arrives," thought the grocer, as he returned to the one habitable room and proceeded to dry his boots at the now merrily blazing logs.

"Faugh! I wish I was out of this place. It chills me. It's *uncanny*. Yes, that Scot's word suits it exactly. I'll be hanged if I don't warn Mr. Dinny Blake to get him. The blackguard can't say he didn't skin my letter, for here it is," picking it up off the chimney-piece. "Ay, and well thumbed too. I'll thumb him—ugh!" he shivered. "I'll remain outside till that boy comes. I feel as if I was in a vault."

Was that a face peering in at the window? He leaped to his feet and rushed over—

"Darkness there and nothing more."

"I can easily understand, *now*, how fellows get their nerves off their hinges. It's a place like this that sets 'em all astray. By the Dick, my flask! I'll take a dose of Dutch courage."

He had just lifted the flask to his mouth when a shrill cry came borne on the rising breeze.

"A banshee!" exclaimed O'Hara. "Hut, tut, old fellow, this will never do! Take a drink! Who ever saw a ghost?—no one. As for—"

Another cry rang out, followed by a succession of shouts.



"The boy Murty, by Jupiter Olympus—Luck now is saved! I'll make the boy stop here tonight in this room—ay, and this house, too. They say three make bad company. I'll try it and disprove the adage for once."

"Misther O'Hara, Misther O'Hara!" yelled Murty, even while he was yet a long way from the house.

"All right. Here I am!" cried the grocer, flinging up the window, or, rather, flinging it out, for it gave way with a terrific crash.

"Where are ye, sir?" Murty didn't relish the dark avenue under the elms.

"Here!"

"Cud ye give me a taste av a light, yer honor?"

O'Hara extended the candle from the window, and, perceiving that the grass grew almost on a level to the sill, leaped out.

"Och, murther! but I thought I'd never raich the place, yer honor," cried the boy. "The ould baste, here, wudn't pass Knocklofty, where Barney Reilly was murdered—God be good to him, this night!—for all the coxins' and collerguins' I cud give him, an' whin he did consint, he tuk the bitin his mouth an' run me into a ditch. I've all the packages safe, sir, barrin' the gun, for Dinny Blake told me that he'd carry that himself, for yer honor, an' in coorse I gev it to him."

"Where is he?"

"I met him below at Brian Dooley's Gap, yer honor!"

"Is he coming on?"

"Faix, I suppose so, yer honor."

"Don't unload the car, Murty. Is there any sort of a shed about here that you could back it into for the night?"

"There's a sort av a shed for horses 'round th' other side av the house, but I cudn't lave the car, yer honor, for I'm for to drive Father Tom himself over for to say first Mass at Barnakilty at five o'clock, an' I daren't go for to disappoint his riverence."

"Faith, you'll disappoint him for once, Murty."

"I wudn't do it for a crock o' goold, sir. Arrah, what luck or grace cud I have av I disappoint the holy man? Divil a sight o' purgathery I'd ever lay my two eyes on, let alone the holy heavens!"

O'Hara knew that to endeavor to keep the lad would be but a fruitless task, so he compounded with Murty by insisting upon his remaining at Derrylo-sary until the arrival of Dinny Blake.

Murty backed the car into the outhouse, and stalled the horse in the hallway. He then knelt down before the log fire, and removing his caubeen, used it as a bellows with such vigor that the wood immediately began to crackle and splutter, and the flames to leap up the chimney.

"What a beastly old rookery this is, Murty," observed O'Hara.

"Divil a worse billet in the barony, yer honor."

"Does Dinny Blake live here all the year round?"

The boy glanced fearfully about him ere he replied, in a low tone:

"They say so, yer honor."

"What sort of man is he?"

"I'd as lave ye'd not be afther axin' me, sir."

"Why so, Murty?"

"Well, bekase I was at me dbuty to-day below wud Father Tom O'Mulligan, at Togher, an' I daren't tell a lie."

"Tell the truth, my boy."

"Well, thin, yer honor"—here Murty glanced around almost in terror, while his voice sank to a hoarse whisper—"he has the worst name that ever was."

O'Hara groaned. He bade a long adieu to his £150.

"Divil a harder man wud the poor people nor he is. He'd sell the bib off av a child's back, an' has put more people out on the roadside to die av coold an' hunger nor any agent, barrin' Lord Corlingham's."

"Is he honest?"

"He's the devil's own nagur, anyhow," was the evasive reply.

O'Hara thought back a little, and knew that his uncle should have the rent by hook or crook. Perhaps the man was only acting under the instructions given him.

"Do you know did Blake go to meet me to-day, Murty?"

"He didn't go for to meet yer honor, for I seen him wud Mick Donovan—the man that shot Misther Val Burke of Gortnallough—an' the two was over the bog at Clash all the evenin', for I was gotherin' turf for the mistress, an' the both of them passed me, an' for fear they'd give me thruble I dropped down behind me kneel an' let them go by, an' they wor talkin' about yer honor, for I heard yer name twict."

Every moment the conviction grew stronger in O'Hara's mind that his agent meant to play him false. He didn't much mind the loss of the money, for now he felt certain that one penny of it he would never see, but an indefinable sense of the truth flitted before him, and he heartily wished himself back at the Brian Borohme, facing the widow, after a snug supper of rashers and eggs and a tumbler of scorching hot poteen punch—perhaps two.

"Murty," he cried, after a silence, "I'll go back with you. I'll be hanged if I'll stop in this old rat-trap of a place. I feel as if I was in my family vault! Get the old horse ready."

"More power, yer honor!" exclaimed the boy. "Faix, I'll rowl ye over to the Brian Borohme while ye'd be axin' the lind av a sack, an'—merciful God!"—springing forward—"there—there's a face agin the windy. It was Mick Dono—"

The report of a gun!

A wild scream!

"I'm kilt, yer honor!" groaned the unfortunate lad, as he fell into O'Hara's arms, a bullet having entered his chest.

O'Hara flung himself upon the floor and dragged the senseless form of Murty under cover. Then he crept up to the window along the floor, and lay beneath it, his heart beating like a Nasmyth hammer, every nerve braced for the struggle for dear life. In a few seconds he heard a movement outside the window, as if some one was amongst the rank grass. Then came a breathing. Then a hand appeared right over where he crouched. Then a pause. Then part of a frieze coat edged

cautiously in. Then the rim of a caubeen. Then the unshaven chin. Then the face and head—and then—

O'Hara leaped upwards and, like a flash, held Donovan in a grasp that, giant though the other was, he could not shake off.

The grocer was a small man, but riveted together by rivets of steel. His hands were enormous, cut of all proportion with the remainder of his frame, and a series of bones held together by muscles, tough as whipcord. Joe O'Hara's grip was a terror, and, knowing this, he felt that he was a match for any man once he got his antagonist inside that grip.

He was now dealing with an assassin, red-handed, and he resolved upon strangling him. Donovan was a man of powerful strength, and feeling the terrible pressure of the hands upon his throat, saw that his neck was in a noose that pulled as tight as a hangman's knot.

The struggle was an awful one. Jerking O'Hara clean out of the window, he endeavored to get at the gun, but the grocer, by a dexterous kick, sent it out of his grasp, and he now essayed to plant O'Hara on the granite window-sill in order to break his back against it. O'Hara's deadly grasp grew tighter, as the other flung him about, and every attempt to get the little man under proved a failure.

Donovan now commenced to rain terrific blows upon O'Hara's head and face, which the latter vainly endeavored to dodge, but as the pressure of the grocer's fingers grew more tense, the blows became wild and out of range, and the villain made a choking effort to gasp the word "Mercy."

O'Hara never allowed the idea of possessing himself of the gun to leave his mind. Bestowing a final squeeze upon the assassin's throat, he flung him off, and leaping to where he knew the weapon lay in the grass, seized it, and, ere the other could so much as raise his arms to defend himself, down came the butt upon his bullet head, leveling him to the earth, where he lay senseless and stunned.

"This is a nice Christmas Eve's work," muttered Joe O'Hara, as he climbed in through the window to the aid of the wounded lad, Murty. "I'm pounded to a jelly, but I've settled the hash of my agent, anyhow." He kicked the logs with his foot, causing a bright and merry blaze, and taking out his flask, leant over the boy, as he poured the vivifying liquid through the bloodless lips and clinched teeth.

"He's not dead. The heart beats. He may not be so badly hit, after all. If I could yoke the car I'd drive him over to the widow's. My God, how sore I am! I hope nothing's broken except my agent's skull. I must look after that horse. Ha! the boy is not gone. Murty! Murty! That's a good lad. Never say die."

"I'm here, Misther O'Hara!" The lad opened his eyes, threw a few sharp glances around, shivered and looked up in O'Hara's face.

"I'm kilt, sir," he gasped, "I—I feel the bullet here," laying his hand on to the region of his heart. "Oh! if I cud only feel Father Tom be me side. Oh! if I cud only get the rites, Misther O'Hara, mebbe I wud die aisy!"

"Don't speak, Murty; I'm going to stanch the blood a little and to yoke the horse. Keep up your courage, man, and you'll be in the Brian Borohme in no time."

The boy's eyes brightened.

"I'll not die till I get there, never fear, sir, an' take no heed to me groans, not if I bawl murder."

O'Hara succeeded, by the aid of the bed-sheets, which he tore into strips, in wrapping a series of bandages around the lad's body, and, having administered another dose of brandy, went in quest of the horse. The quadruped was easily discovered, as was also the shed where the car was sheltered, and in a few minutes the vehicle was drawn up before the door.

"I'd better see how my agent is," muttered O'Hara. "I'd like to leave him safe for the constabulary."

Donovan was lying where he had fallen, and was breathing stentoriously.

"I'll manacle you, my fine fellow!" said the grocer, and, suiting the action to the word, he took some remaining strips of sheeting and bound the senseless assassin, hand and foot.

"Undo these knots if you can!" bestowing a final kick on the recumbent form. "I haven't been tying up tea and sugar all my life without knowing how to construct a pretty bewildering knot."

Murty, brave as a young lion, by the help of O'Hara, struggled to his feet and contrived to reach the car.

"Let the baste have her head, yer honor," he gasped. "She knows she's goin' home. Whin we come forinist Knocklofty, where Barry Reilly was murdered—the Lord be merciful to him!—I'll tell ye, ye'll have for to humor the baste a bit there, anyway."

The old mare went out into the darkness at an amble and at a cautious pace that proved the truth of Murty's forecast. She did not, however, refuse to pass the heap of stones on the side of the road which marked the spot where Barry Reilly went down to his death, but on gaining the high road broke into a canter, which never ceased until she stopped of her own accord, opposite the Brian Borohme.

"All in bed and asleep!" cried O'Hara. "I'll waken the widow while you'd say knife."

He commenced to pound away at the door, but there was no response, and it was only after ten minutes of shouting and knocking that he reluctantly gave over the attempt.

"Thry the back-door, yer honor!—the key is always left there for me. Av yer honor will gimme a hand aff a the car, I'll go bail I'll get in."

O'Hara helped the lad round to the back of the shebeen, and beneath the door was found the key. In a trice, having lighted a candle, he assisted Murty to bed.

"I never knew the mistress out o' the house so late as this afore. Och, shure, it's the midnight Mass she's gone to over beyant at Timolin. That's it!"

O'Hara instantly set out for the constabulary barracks, much against the inclination of the old mare, and having routed up the force, a sergeant

and three privates, one of whom started four miles for the doctor, returned to the Brian Borohme, where Murty's deposition was taken, after which the party, consisting of the sergeant, a private, and O'Hara, wended their way to Derrylo-sary.

"It's me opinion," said the sergeant, as they hurried along, "that Donovan was hired by Blake to pick you off, and Blake will be able to prove an *alibi*. Donovan is one of the most desperate characters on this side of the county, and ye must have the strength of tin min to have been able to take a fall out of him."

They found Donovan, who had come to his senses, in a kneeling position near the window.

"I'll tell all," he growled. "Yez needn't be hard on me. Sergeant Joyce, I shot the boy instead av the man, an' it was Dinny Blake that ped me for doin' the job—may hell-fire roast him!"

"Where can we find him?"

"I'll tell ye, thin, an' the only favor I'll ax is for to be brought face to face wid him. He's over beyant at Clash, at Jem Heffernan's shebeen."

Father Tom O'Mulligan had to cross the bog on foot to say his first Mass on Christmas morning, as neither Murty nor the car turned up. His reverence was provided with a lantern, and carried a stout blackthorn to probe any suspicious-looking ground. His Scotch terrier, Dandie, accompanied him.

The dog, who had been exhibiting signs of uneasiness for a few perches, now hung back, and commenced to bark with all his might.

"A stray sheep," thought the Father, as he urged Dandie to go forward.

As he reached the boghole into which the Widow Dempsey had fallen, the dog began to yowl, and stood quivering with terror at its edge.

The priest held the lantern over the hole.

"Mother of God!" he exclaimed, "It's a human being!—a woman!—Mrs. Dempsey!"

She had sunk almost up to the chin.

Father Tom didn't lose a second. By lying flat on his stomach he reached out to her until he caught her arm. Using his herculean strength—he was a son of gallant Tipperary, and stood six feet two in his shoes—he succeeded in dragging her towards the edge, and, having a good grip of her now, he commenced to roar for help in the faint hope of attracting the attention of some of the villagers en route to first Mass. It was a feeble hope, but in extremities no chance must be lost.

It so happened that the constabulary party, with their two prisoners—for Dinny Blake was arrested in Jim Heffernan's shebeen—were returning to the police barracks by the road, and the very first cry for help uttered by the priest was heard.

Murty did not die of his wounds. The ball was extracted by Doctor Valentine Burke, and the lad is now as strapping a young fellow as ever courted the girls at fair, pattern, or wake.

Dinny Blake and his *cofrère*, Mick Donovan, were sentenced to prison for life. They are now engaged in the jail at Galway in picking oakum.

Poor Mrs. Dempsey!—Mrs. O'Hara, I mean!—after a severe fit of illness, brought on by the terrible experiences of that memorable Christmas Eve—became herself again, and having disposed of her interest in the Brian Borohme, repaired to Derrylo-sary—rebuilt by its owner—in the capacity of Mrs. Joe O'Hara.

"Faith," observed Joe to me, as I sat at the fireside in the snug dining-room at Derrylo-sary, over a smoking tumbler of poteen punch, "faith, Corry, me boy! there's few fellows have a queerer story of Christmas Eve to tell than yours, truly."

And Joe O'Hara was right.

## A FIFTEENTH CENTURY CHRISTMAS TOURNAMENT.

AMONG the many associations of feudal festivities and mediæval ceremonials which Christmas brings, the mind may properly revert to those splendid pageants of chivalry, joust tournaments and jousts, which fire the romantic imagination even more, perhaps, than the "pride, pomp and circumstance" of actual war. And, if the reader would realize pictorially one of these magnificent displays of knightly prowess and courtesy, we are acquainted with no more adequate representation thereof than the fresco of which we give a two-page illustration. Moreover, this is an illustration of a historic occurrence, not of a mere fiction of poet or novelist. The fresco represents a tournament at Raab (on the river of the same name, in Hungary), held on Christmas Day, 1477, according to custom on similar occasions, in celebration of the marriage of King Matthias Corvin, or Corvins, with his second wife, Beatrice of Aragon, daughter of the King of Sicily. More particularly, the painter depicts the moment when that doughty warrior—the frequent conqueror of the Turks, and afterwards the captor of Vienna—comes before his bride for the prize, after having vanquished the valiant, and, as we see by the wreath on his shivered spear, the previously successful knight, Holubar of Bohemia—a country Corvin had been at war with for rebelling against his sovereignty.

The fresco relates, then, to a time when chivalry was in its heyday in Germany and the neighboring provinces, as well as all over Europe—a period contemporary with Froissart, and immediately preceding the glorious age of Maximilian. Here we have all the leading elements of that most stately ceremonial of chivalry, the tournament—so called, from the practice of the knights running *par tour*, or by turns, at the quintain. The lists have been prepared, galleries raised for the various orders of spectators, a superbly-decorated pavilion erected for the Queen-elect of Love and Beauty, the absolute arbitress of the awards (in this instance evidently the King's bride), together with her brilliant suite; the arms of the knights proposing to joust have been exposed and examined; and these "right worshipful" and *preux chevaliers* have sworn to obey the laws of the lists. In this case we may also understand that the Bohemian vassal has, by touching the King's shield with the reverse of his lance, dared his rightful sovereign to a combat of courtesy, not *d'outrance*, for their spears are blunt, having the mornie attached to them.

The time has approached for opening this high festival of "holy" chivalry. The spectators arrive, attired, from king to churl, in their gayest habiliments; the knights armed *cap-à-pie* in glittering damascened steel, and astride noble chargers of highest mettle, gorgeously housed and caparisoned, range themselves at the ends of the parade; then the marshal, or "speaker"—the important personage on our right in the engraving, holding the warden, which he throws down when the jousting is to cease, and leaning on the shield emblazoned with the arms of the institutor of the games—steps forth and orders the King-at-Arms and heralds to summon knights and esquires "To achievement! to achievement!" This office they perform, not forgetting in their zeal the cry for "Largesse!" Anon the attendant minstrels pour forth their wildest war-strains, and the shrill trumpets of the heralds pierce the tumultuous air with the flourish of onset. Suddenly all is still as death. Then from each extremity of the lists two gallant horsemen prick forward their impatient steeds; a moment more they are dashing in full career, with bowed head and lance in rest, straight at each other, horse-trappings, plumes, and fluttering ladies' favors streaming in the wind—"rashing together," as the old Arthurian romancers have it, "like two wild boars." Another instant they meet, they hurtle, a crash is heard and all is over. Like thunder following the bolt of heaven, a deafening shout is raised by the spectators. The knight has struck the king full on breast-plate or visor; but the lance has shivered against that firm-seated warrior, whilst the Bohemian, hit not less fairly, is unhorsed and hurled to the ground—the greatest dishonor which could befall a knight. With a touch of irony, the painter represents a jester as tending the discomfited champion, as well as his own esquire, and another fool is seen catching the riderless horse. The victor, meanwhile, having reined in his charger, aided by his esquire, and unlaced and doffed his helmet, giving his lance to a page, approaches to receive the chief prize of the tournament.

The eminent painter from whom we derive this most effective representation, M. Alexander Wagner, is a native Hungarian, whose examples of fresco-manipulation at Munich have elicited the warmest praise of students in art. The original of the subject engraved is a large fresco in the Redoute, a conspicuous building at Pesth, erected for dancing.

## A CHRISTMAS IDYL.

By Amanda M. Douglas.

CHAPTER I.—CHRISTMAS EVE.

THE streets were full of happy people when Paul Sherburne stepped out of the dingy office, where he had been closeted for the last three hours. It was dusk now, and the lamps were lighted; the stores were all aglow, and the streets seemed one brilliant mass of illumination. Windows glittered in tempting display, groups of young and old laughed and chatted, and hurried in and out, laden with budgets. There was a spicy smell of evergreens in the crisp air.

For it was Christmas-time, Christmas Eve, the carnival of love and good-will, the greater feast of "Peace on earth."

But Paul Sherburne had no part nor lot in the matter. The wind was keen and cold to him, the gay laughter jarred like sweet bells out of tune; there was no peace, no good-will. He felt so bitter, so crushed, so utterly despondent. Could he go home and tell them they were beggars, nay, worse—so much in debt that a whole lifetime of hard labor would barely suffice to free them. They had staked everything on the issue of this suit, so sure they had the right on their side, and instead, it was a shame second only to a crime, though they had not sinned in the matter. He thought of them in the pretty sitting-room, waiting dinner for him—his sweet, pale, invalid mother, his grave, fair sister, Cecilia, with her passion for music; arch, dainty Mabel, who flashed hither and thither with the grace of a humming-bird.

"How can I tell them this night of all nights?" he groans to himself. "There will never be a Merry Christmas for us again—never!"

Then he plunged down a darkened side street, not heeding whither. Oh, how cold! Does any one ever really freeze, he wonders, or starve in this Christian land? God help the very poor! Where will they be another year? Like letters of fire, all that evidence burns before his brain, and he goes on rapidly, fiercely, until suddenly the lights come about again, and he pauses a moment, half-dazed.

"Hello! Sherburne!" cries a gay young voice. "What is all this mad pursuit about? Why, you look like a ghost! Surely the suit has not gone against you?"

"Yes."

Sherburne's voice is hoarse and strained.

"Oh, there must be some flaw or mistake—"

"No, there is none. We have always believed ourselves right, Brent. I would not have sworn a false oath, or told a wrong story, for twice that money, but some one further back did not hesitate, and Paul's voice rings with intense bitterness. "Two hours ago I saw the real proof for the first time. No, I can't fight for a lie."

"Are you going home?"

"Shall I ever have the courage to go and tell them the truth?" and he gives a mirthless laugh. "Christmas Eve, too! What a horrible travesty!"

"See here, Sherburne, don't let this thing drive you out of your senses. Come with me," and he links his arm in that of his friend. "Miss Caryll plays *Juilet* to-night, and I have two tickets. Everybody goes wild over her, you know. Come, it is early, and we will have a quiet talk over this unfortunate business before the play begins."

Paul Sherburne is but half-persuaded, yet his friend leads him along, and when he is seated in the warm theatre, where the lights are burning low and the early comers straggling in noiselessly, he gives a great shiver of something like relief. Despair is staved off for a brief while.

"There may be some new evidence," begins Brent.

"No. My grandfather made a horrible mistake





A FIFTEENTH CENTURY CHRISTMAS TOURNAMENT.—KING MATHIAS CORVINUS OF HUNGARY COM





MARY COMES BEFORE HIS BRIDE FOR THE PRIZE.—FROM A PAINTING BY M. ALEXANDER WAGNER.—SEE PAGE 283.



—if it was that. Don't let us talk of it, Brent. Tell me of Miss Caryll. I shall have to give up these things in the future, for we will be left fearfully in debt."

"Miss Caryll, you know, is a sort of puzzle in the theatrical world. She believes in Mrs. Brown's star—'So high, so pure, and so apart, a woman's glory lies!' Nobody can get near her in private life. She comes and goes with her maid. You see her on the stage, and that is all the glimpse vouchsafed to mortals. But such acting—no, it isn't acting; it is real life. Everybody else goes into the Christmas plays just now, but she keeps her steady way like a queen. She is magnificent. There, that is all any one knows about her. I have reached the end of my knowledge soon."

"Young, of course," comments Sherburne, briefly.

"Oh, yes, and beautiful—real beauty, not mere stage tricks. I hope there will be a good house. She never was here before."

Sherburne glances around. Yes, the house is filling up rapidly. The best people in the town, too, and here and there a nod is graciously bestowed upon him. It is for Paul Sherburne, the rising young artist, who has come of good blood for generations. What will they say when they know that his grandfather kept back a true will and substituted another—forged, maybe—that he might live in luxury, like a prince; and Paul feels now that he would rather never have known his grandfather. Good old blood, forsooth!

The overture begins. Ah! if Cecilia were only here! and then another pang rends Paul. Oh! how can they all drop out of this pleasant, cultured life—this ease and independence—and take up the hard side of poverty. They are not rich, these Sherburnes—their grandfather spent too much for that—but they are comfortable, refined and charming, their little world thinks. And to-night they must drop out of it for many years, at least. Paul cannot wait for pictures to be sold when they all depend upon him for bread. He sees himself perched at a high desk all the long day, all the pleasant Summer weather, until letters and figures run together, and eyes and brain are weary. Well, even that—it will be honest toil!

But he loses his desperate mood listening to the sweet old play of love and youth and death—such sweetness and such sadness, that it always touches the heart of the weary old world.

There is Juliet prattling to her nurse; there she is vowing to Romeo, and now she stands in her balcony, murmuring the sweetest good-night ever put into words. Paul listens and looks. What is there about Miss Caryll that seems to take him back to early youth! Some tone of the voice, some gesture, some glance of the eyes that are so dark and soft—where was it!—where was it?"

"Brent," he says, as the curtain falls, "I have surely seen Miss Caryll somewhere."

"In your dreams. She was educated abroad, and has been in this country barely a year—never in this town before. I saw her two months ago in New York, when all the lion-hunters went crazy over her, and she would listen to none of their golden tongues. No, you cannot have seen her."

Paul is not convinced. Nay, when she looks at him—surely, it is at him!—he fancies a gleam of kindred recognition lights up her eyes. Oh, that smile! Has he dreamed of her? Has he seen some one play Juliet who is so very like? What a puzzle!

"How long was she abroad?" he asks. "She lived there with her father, a musical genius, I believe—an old Englishman. I suppose she is English."

"She looks more like an American woman," says Paul, in the same concise tone. "Alma Caryll—that is a stage name, of course."

Brent nods as the curtain rises. It is all over—the sad, sad tragedy. People go out quietly, it is so real. Paul gropes a little, his eyes are full of tears, and a sense of something lost out of his life that is not money, not fame—a floating memory that eludes at every turn.

The streets are still crowded. The churches are alight, the last touches of green and holly berries being added. They pass one where the organ is pealing triumphantly, for Brent will not let him go until he is safe in the shelter of his home, the trouble has struck him so hard, he thinks. They say "Good-night" at last.

When Paul enters the house they all glance at his changed face, and the story is told without words. Cecilia stands up, straight and tall, fair as an Easter lily; but her face is firm, not a weak line in it.

"We have lost," she says. "I could bear the tidings better on some other night."

"Oh!" cries Mabel, with a quick pang. They sit down before the sleepy grate-fire, and he tells them with a brave, albeit faltering voice, of the sin Grandfather Sherburne committed. Ah, they are glad now that their father—the strict, upright, honorable Ward Sherburne—is not here to feel the stain, to know the loss.

Over their tears and sorrow the Christmas bells ring out the midnight hour. Joyous peals, solemn peals, soft caroling chimes.

"Unto us a child is born."

Alma Caryll hears them as well. She made no pauses in the greenroom, but came home in a close coach with her maid. It is a silent ride, for neither like to try their voices amid the din of rattling wheels. There is a respectful greeting at the hotel, though they can scarcely see the lovely, muffled face, as she goes to her room with the air of a princess. Then throwing off her wraps, she consults Margery's face, which puzzles her somewhat.

"You heard no tidings of them?" she says, with a gasp.

"Oh! yes. The very same family. Mr. Paul Sherburne is an artist. The father is dead. There are two sisters, Cecilia and Mabel!"

"Cecilia and Belle," she murmured, softly. "And what about the lawsuit?"

"They are likely to lose it, I believe. Some new evidence came to hand, and Mr. Paul withdraws and gives up everything!"

"Margie, I saw him to-night, I am quite sure. He did not know me!—how could he?" and she

laughs as she draws up her slender figure with pride. "He was puzzled; I saw that in his eyes, and I played for him—right to him, in truth—and he may guess. If I were not so weary, I should want to go this very night. And if they are in any sorrow or trouble, I will pay back their tender care a thousand-fold. They were so good to me; I can scarcely wait! A blessed Christmas morning it shall be for all of us! But what makes you so grave, Margie?" and the sweet, earnest eyes study the older and now troubled face.

"I!" and she flushes while her eyes droop. "He has been here!"

"He!" Alma Caryll gives a cry of despairing pain, and throws herself into the armchair, wringing her slender hands. "Oh, Margie! after all his promises!"

"I knew he would not keep them," the companion replies, bitterly. "You cannot trust him in anything!"

"Was he—?"

Alma shudders over the word. It has a nameless horror for her, although she has seen many actors under the influence of liquor. But that any one whose blood ran in her veins should so demean himself as this man has, and then come to claim her—ah! that is horrible!

That is the sad secret of her life! She has known want and poverty and toil; she has been homeless and crept into the shelter of a friendly stoop to sleep; she has been a servant and heard sharp words; she has begged for a mouthful of bread when she was near to starving. After this came care and tenderness, appreciation and training, scope for the genius that was her birthright—her mother's gift to her. She does not like to linger over the hard phases, still she is not ashamed of them; but when this man, who has the lawful right to claim her as his child, comes to her with bleary eyes and maudlin speech, and begs for a little money, the very light and joy seems to go out of everything. The world might only smile over it with tolerant pity; she is the genius, the actress whom they adore; the drunken father is an accident of fate that she is not answerable for.

She goes over this reasoning often, and yet it does not satisfy her fine pride. Suppose she was in some one's drawing-room, a little queen of social life, and this man stood waiting at the threshold to beg money of her, as she came down the steps. No promise holds him, no money buys him, no pleading changes him. He begs and cries, and she—ah! she cannot but pity. Yet it is all of no use.

She breathes a long, dreary sigh. "Did you give him anything, Margie," she asks, in a hard, strained voice.

"Yes. He promised to go back to the city to-night, but what is his promise worth? Oh, my dear, dear child, listen to reason. The money you give him only makes him worse. Place him somewhere in partial confinement with a keeper. Support him and let him alone. Why should he blight all your young, sweet life?"

"Margie, I wonder how children feel who love their fathers? From the first moment he came to me I have loathed him and shrank from him with such a feeling of repulsion that—that—I have much ado to keep from hating him. I cannot judge rightly. Is it my own selfish pride, my fear of being shamed? Ought I to grudge him my money? I cannot tell what is right," and the fair head drooped wearily.

"If you would let me decide. Dear, you are such a very child," and the soft hands take the unresisting face in a clasp fond as that of a sister. No friend could have been truer or more tender than this quiet Margie, who worships her young mistress.

"Something must be done," and she chokes down a sob. "I meant to be so happy here in the quaint, old town, where—but oh, Margie, all my life has been sad. I wonder if it will ever be like that of other women? And yet they envy me, bright and happy women, who have homes and love, who are shielded from every care."

They were praising her in many a home, this Christmas Eve—they would have showered treasures and gifts at her feet if she would have allowed, and wondered to find her cold and distant, little dreaming of the burden she carried, shadowing the natural gaiety of youth.

As she lies on her pillow, listening to the midnight bells that usher in Christmas, she thinks of some bygone childish days, when she was merry with Cecilia and Belle, and Paul was her champion—her true knight, even to the fateful moment when his father had surprised them in a forbidden enjoyment, and would have struck her, save that Paul took the blow. Did they remember? Would they be glad to see her, or would they fear she might bring contamination into their peaceful home? Misfortune might make them tenderer.

#### CHAPTER II.—CHRISTMAS MORN.

THE pretty little town was astir early with its holiday joy. Children ran wild with new sleds, blowing their horns, and greeting one another with merry wishes. The sun shone and the sky was clear. Out in suburbs or untraveled places the streets were still white with snow.

The Sherburnes had to look their sorrow bravely in the face. It had taken the pleasure out of their gifts, the joy out of their wishes. Everything, even to their very food, belonged to another. The taste was like ashes in their mouths.

They sit over the late breakfast, heavy-eyed and pale, and glance at each other questioning. Cecilia wonders if she cannot find music pupils, or she might sing in a church, for Paul is not to do anything while she sits at home with folded hands. She wonders what the new home will be like—stripped of the pictures, the ornaments and the easy-chairs that have been here ever since she was born and long before. Her whole life seems to be wound about them. Can she live elsewhere?"

The streets are divided between sleighs and wagons, but now and then some merry bells dash past their windows, or a group of children go singing carols. Once Paul raises the sash and throws them a handful of money, then he remembers, with a flush, that it is scarcely his money. Now a coach halts and the driver opens the door. Two ladies alight.

"I don't know," says Cecilia, with quick tears in her eyes, "how I can welcome any friend to-day. We should be alone in our sorrow."

The tidy maid has opened the door and ushers the visitors in the drawing-room. The elder of the two enters; the other pauses in the hall.

"The family are all in there?"—with a slight, imperious wave of the hand.

"Yes," answers the maid in amazement, and the radiant being walks in upon them. There is a subtle perfume about the velvets and furs; there is a kind of dazzle as if the sun had suddenly illumined and glorified the room. And oh, the tender, appealing beauty of the fair young face, the soft, entreating, pathetic dark eyes that seem to question mutely from face to face, reading nothing but surprise.

"Then you do not know me? You have forgotten!" says the sad, sweet voice, with a struggle for bravery perceptible in it.

Mrs. Sherburne turns as if she were striving to remember if ever this vision crossed her path before. Paul, who has been leaning his elbow on the mantel, comes forward with a strange, awed face.

"You are Alma Caryll," he answers, his eyes fixed on her by some far-reaching spell. "I saw you last night but not for the first time, I am sure," and the radiance of joy crosses his face. "You are—Alice Calderon!"

Cecilia utters a cry of surprise.

"Not Alice!—our own sweet, pretty, lost Alice!"

Our own! How comforting the words sound. She half-kneels at Mrs. Sherburne's feet, and clasps the thin hands lying in her lap, but Paul is beside her and takes one of her own, so fair and soft, in his, in a wondering, incredulous way.

"This is what puzzled me so last night—this shadowy resemblance. I had a cloud of care and perplexity on my mind, or I must have remembered Alice!" Then he takes a step back and studies her face again. This is the wonderful actress who moved her audience at will, and yet about whom the world seems to know nothing!

"Yes," she answers, "I am Alice Calderon, whom you all befriended in her hour of need, whom—?" and they all think of that last scene.

"Forgive him!" begs Mrs. Sherburne, with a tremulous voice. "Remember that his father's whims and follies made him severe in the extreme. And he has gone to his rest. He was honest and upright, and would not have swerved from the truth to save his own life."

"I forgave him long ago," and she smiled through tears. "After all, it sent me out into the world to try my strength and do my best. I have not shamed you, my best and dearest friends!" yet she gives a quick glance around.

"Shamed us!" cried Paul, with triumph in his tone. "You should have seen her last night, Cecilia!"

"But all these years?" says Mrs. Sherburne.

"And where did you go?"

A wavering color flits about her face. She will not pain them by detailing the weeks of pain and want that came between. "I persevered," she answers, with a smile. "I went to New York, and at last found some one who would listen to my wants. I went on the stage in children's parts, and then abroad with a variety troupe. In London, an old Englishman, who had been connected for years with the opera, took a fancy to me. He was not rich, but he adopted me and gave me a musical education, but decided, before that was finished, that acting rather than singing was my forte. He was so good, so proud of me, that I tried my best for his sake. Two years ago he died. Last March I returned to America with engagements on every hand. I did not know—?" and she pauses.

"He was very sorry," explains Paul. "I think he softened at the last. But he has been dead five years."

"I could not come and sow dissension between you," and now she rises in her old imperious way. "A month ago I learned all that had happened to you. I made an engagement to come here Christmas Eve, and resolved to see you. I was quite sure, last night, you were Paul Sherburne," and she turned her lovely face to him.

"How strange!" exclaimed Cecilia. "Yet you always were an actress. And that night's work would have been amusing if its results had not proved so sad. Since the genius was given to you, why not use it?"

The one thing Mr. Sherburne had resolutely set his face against had been theatre-going. His father had half-ruined himself in the infatuation. Mrs. Sherburne, in the rounds of her tender charity, had one day found a deserted wife, a refined and accomplished woman, dying of consumption. Her child, the little Alice, was unusually beautiful, and after her sad bereavement Mrs. Sherburne brought her home. She would fain have adopted her, but Mr. Sherburne had a nervous objection to placing the little waif on an equality with his own children. So she remained for some months, until the ill-fated evening when she had arranged a little play for their amusement. Paul, Cecilia and herself were the actors. In the midst of it, to their great dismay, Mr. Sherburne entered.

Alice had the small stage to herself at that moment, and valiantly took the blame upon her own shoulders; but Mr. Sherburne went into a towering rage and would have struck the little girl but for Paul's interference, although he declared she should not stay in the house another hour. Alice took him at his word and disappeared that very evening. All Mrs. Sherburne's efforts to find her proved unavailing, though she would not have dared to bring her back in the home circle. Kind and indulgent in most other matters, he was rigid in this. His children should not be corrupted by a stray waif.

"Yes, I had the genius," Alma Caryll utters, proudly. "I think some old playacting blood runs in my veins. I meant that night, child as I was, to achieve a success, and come back to you pure proud woman, and I have done it. Margie there, in the other room, can tell you. She has been mother, sister, friend."

Mrs. Sherburne rises and kisses the fair brow. "My child," she says, with a great tremble in her voice, "my dear, lost child! You are a Christmas gift to us just when a bitter misfortune overshadowed us. Thank God for this!"

Cecilia and Mabel hang about her. Deft hands disrobe her of her wrappings and seat her in a cozy armchair. She is theirs now, for a few hours at least. The great world cannot claim her between, and if these hours are fleet they shall be golden. They do not even want to talk about the loss, but she will, and the fond sympathizing heart is pained at their ruin, and yet—now she can reward them for that old-time love, that goodness to her mother. She can read the fine delicate pride in each face, and she will do nothing to wound it, but this mother shall be hers, these sisters dear to her as if they were her very kin; then she pauses suddenly in her dreams of the future, and her face is scarlet with some new emotion that is not shame nor fear; but Paul's eyes are fixed upon hers with such a strange steady gaze, that every pulse starts and trembles.

"Oh, there is something else," begins Mrs. Sherburne. "Paul, you remember Mr. Calderon? It will be sad for you to know, my dear, but your father came to us—"

"Oh, not here!" she cries, her face paling suddenly, and the small hands clasped in pain. "Not here—surely not to you!" Is this one blot on her life, the thing she can neither help nor hinder, to confront her everywhere?

"My dear, yes. He came to trace your mother. He was truly repentant, I think. You see, he had a fancy for inventions and discoveries, and scarcely thought how she and her little child were to get bread. One day, when he seemed on the very eve of success, he took the last of her jewels, just as they were in the case, and pawned them. Her patience had been tried to the bitter end, and the next day she packed the few clothes that remained, and with her daughter went to do for herself. He scarcely missed her then, but years after, when he came to have a little success, he traced her hither, and learned that she was dead. Then he made an effort to find you, but his health was so shattered that he came back to die, for he wanted to be buried beside your mother. My dear, try to forgive him! He was a curious, learned person, with such boards of knowledge stored away in his brain, and but few practical ideas among them. His was a sad, wasted life; but I thought you would like to know that they lie together in an old-fashioned churchyard, just outside the city, where my own mother's people are buried."

"Dead!" Alma says, in a hushed, awesome voice. "Dead! my own father! You are quite sure? There could be no mistake?"

Her breath comes in great gasps, and her eyes have in them a piteous appeal. If this is truly her father, who then is the other that had made her life a burden?

"My dear," pleads the soft voice, "do not look so frightened. It was your father, surely. He brought back your mother's jewels, all that he was able to redeem—her marriage-certificate and many other papers. There was a false bottom to the jewel-case which contained them, though he did not know it at the time. Paul, will you go to my desk and find that faded purple case?"

"He died," Alma goes on saying, in a dazed, absent way. "Was there no one else? Did he have a brother?"

"I do not know. There was a person came here, let me see, over a year ago, to make some inquiries. But he had a curious, furtive expression, an unpleasant look, and I had promised never to give this case into any hands but yours."

"How good you have been to me and mine," Alma says, deeply moved.

Paul returns with the case. It is much faded and the silver platings sadly tarnished. Alice Calderon is engraved on the top. Its rightful owner opens it and pours its contents in her lap. A necklace and cross, some rings and ear-pendants and an old-fashioned bracelet. How quaint and simple they look to her! What would her mother say to her brilliant collection?

The little spring is touched and the papers taken out. Old and yellow, with a curious, musty smell. Marriage-certificates, birth and death registers, love letters. She glances them over with an awesome feeling, as if she was touching dead fingers.

"Oh, see here!" she exclaims, presently, more startled than she cares to show. "Here is the name of Sherburne—Mark Sherburne—married to Anabella Ross. And my mother's name was Ross."

She glances up as if she expects them to explain it. Nor is she mistaken. Paul catches the paper in his hands.

"Mark Sherburne!" and his voice is clearly, strongly triumphant. "Mother, Cecilia, our case hinges on this man. He may, perhaps, have deeded or sold his rights to our grandfather, but if he left heirs, they are the first claimants of the estate. He went off in his youth and no one knew whether he married or not; there is no record. Perhaps grandfather was right, after all. There might have been no will to suppress. Let me see them all!"

He tumbles them over with eager, trembling fingers. Mark Sherburne marries an Englishwoman in one of his journeys abroad. His daughter, Miss Sherburne, marries her cousin, Alden Ross, and their child is mother of Alice. So the little orphan taken to their home and heart is of their own kin. They have a right to claim her, this stately, beautiful, famous Alma Caryll. And if the lawsuit goes against them they will not care, they all insist, since she will be the gainer by it.

Alma laughs. Why, this morning she thought she could never be light-hearted, and now she might dance for very joy. She, who had to take her Christmas greeting from admiring strangers, now has loving friends and relatives of her own. For this mother shall be hers in deed and truth. Does Paul think so, watching the beautiful eyes?

"Margie," she cries presently, and brings in her faithful friend, who must hear the wonderful story over again. And now she is delivered from this strange impostor who somehow had discovered her identity and traded upon it. She even forgives him, and Paul promises to settle with him to-morrow. She will never lack for a champion again.

The church bells stopped ringing long ago. There were carols and anthems and sermons, and grand Christmas dinners. The joyous sun has been high up in the clear heaven and is going



down, but nowhere can he find happier hearts, though their Christmas dinner has been well nigh forgotten.

That evening the theatre is full again and Alma Caryl plays *Juliet* with such grace and fervor that her audience is entranced. Celia looks and listens, Belle is drowned in tears, but Paul dreams of another *Romeo* and another ending. He is there at the door when she comes out in her wraps, and draws the fair hand through his arm.

"Merry Christmas," he says, softly. "Has any one wished you that this whole day?"

"They have done still better," and there are tears and smiles in her face. "They have brought it to me!"

## ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

By Etta W. Pierce.

IN a deep bay window, hung with crimson silk, two persons, a man and a woman, stood gazing silently out into the gathering December night. Behind them stretched a long drawing-room lighted by an open fire—a genuine yule-log—that spread its warmth and cheer from a hearth of Dutch tiles, and shone with rich Rembrandt effect on the silken damask and brass-work, the old bronze and china, the beveled glass and stiff family portraits of the handsome apartment. Holly wreaths brightened the dark walls, and Sévres vases, full of Christmas roses, ornamented the high mantel.

Outside the window glimmered a frozen avenue, overhung with creaking branches, a stone balustrade fringed with icicles and a desolate lawn, where a fountain wrapped in straw stood like a melancholy ghost.

Darkness was rapidly falling. The busy seaside town beyond the gates of Holmwood twinkled with lights. The fishermen's windows up and down the bleak beach shone cheerfully in the bitter gloom. Overhead was a sombre sky, full of storm. The wind blew straight from the North in searching, pitiless gusts, and up from the rocky shore, the great sea invisible in the gathering twilight, sent up a sullen wintry roar.

"Carol, carol, Christians,  
Christmas comes again."

hummed Marcia Tudor, with her riant face pressed to the frosty plate glass of the window. "Look, Nigel! There's a great flake whirling down. Tomorrow will be a white Christmas."

She was a little sparkling brunette, arrayed in silk and velvet that seemed far too grand and heavy for her petite figure, and with diamonds blazing on her tiny hands and in her ears, and at her soft brown throat. She turned as she spoke, and lifted her eyes to the face of the man beside her—the man whose wife she was to be on the morrow. He gave a nervous start, as if waking from sleep.

"Eh? I beg your pardon. A white Christmas? By Jove! I should call it a black one. The house is infernally like a tomb to-night!"

And yet the two could distinctly hear music and merriment in distant rooms, doors opening and closing, footsteps and pleasant voices. Miss Tudor opened wide her black eyes.

"I fear you are out of spirits," she said, dryly. "At dinner you were sadly *distract*, and you had no appetite—your mother noticed it."

"My mother is an uncomfortably sharp woman," answered Nigel Kave, bitterly.

He stood in the shadow of the crimson curtain, his dark eyes cast sullenly down, his lips set in a hard line. He was barely two and twenty, tall, handsome, with a high-bred, *insouciant* face, marred now by a miserable, moody look. Plainly this bridegroom-elect was not transported with his approaching happiness.

Miss Tudor drummed on the pane, and sang another snatch of Christmas song:

"Night hung on the hill-top,  
Stars shone in the sky  
When the Prince of Salvation  
Came down from on high,  
No room in the inn  
For his heavenly head,  
So in Bethlehem's manger  
They made him a bed."

"Nigel," she said, shyly, "I hope the storm will pass with the night. I would like the sun to shine on our wedding-day—it's an omen of good, you know."

His wedding-day! Something like a shudder went over his stalwart young figure.

"I don't believe in omens," he answered, brusquely; "let us draw the curtain, and shut out this cursed night."

The little heiress stared hard at her morose lover.

"How strange you are, Nigel—how bearish! It is absurd to ask it; of course, but—are you sure that you are quite happy?"

A little thrill of distress had crept into her voice.

"Happy!" he echoed, with a short, mirthless laugh. "By Jove! yes, madly, outrageously happy! It's the duty of every bridegroom to be that, is it not?"

She put up one pretty hand and smoothed his gloomy face.

"I do not wish to doubt your word, but, of late, Nigel, I have sometimes fancied—"

He hastily seized her hand, thereby cutting the sentence short.

"Where is your ring, Marcia?"

The slender finger on which the big Kave diamond had blazed for two happy months was now bare. She saw her loss and grew pale.

"Oh, it was always too large!" she gasped. "Help me to look for it, Nigel. I am sure this means misfortune!"

"Nonsense! Don't be superstitious!" he answered, but he knelt on the rich carpet, and searched with her for the missing jewel. They examined every corner, poked under the claw-footed chairs and the Venetian cabinets, but found no diamond. Kave was the first to scramble to his feet.

"You are spoiling your smart gown, Marcia," he said, dryly. "Let the ring go. By-the-way, here is another." He drew a tiny case from his pocket, opened it, and disclosed a hoop of plain gold. "You will wear this to-morrow—why not put it on now in place of the other?"

She colored and shook her head.

"No—oh no! That would be in bad form, as the English say. Probably I have dropped my diamond in my dressing-room or at the table. If you do not mind, I will go and see."

He did not mind in the least. He listened till the last echo of her departing feet had died away, then he turned from the deep window, from the warm firelight, and, stepping into a wainscoted hall, put on hat and overcoat and walked straight out of the house.

He had a summons to answer on this stormy Christmas Eve, a trust to keep, of which that fond little brunette, Miss Tudor, knew nothing, and the hour for it had already struck.

With his hat drawn low over his eyes, he hurried down a drive, where white flakes were flying, and dead boughs rattling, like the dry bones of Ezekiel's vision, and through an open gate passed into the highroad.

"What the deuce can I say to her?" That was the perplexing burden of his thought. Along the entire length of a lighted street he went, looking not to the right hand nor to the left, until, at last, he found himself on a strip of lonesome beach, at the base of a barren hill.

It was a bleak and desolate spot—uncanny, as the Scotch say, at all times, but doubly so on this eerie night. Kave turned into a narrow path, and ascended the hill, till he reached a large stone, with the remains of an iron staple in it—part of an old gibbet. Here, long ago, two sailors had been hung for the murder of a messmate. The people of Whitehaven carefully avoided the place after night-fall, for it was said the defunct mariners had an unpleasant habit of visiting the scene of their former suffering. Kave looked around as if expecting to see them now; but nothing human or superhuman was in sight. He lighted a match and drew out his watch.

"It is past the hour," he muttered, "Where the mischief can she be?"

He seated himself on the old gibbet stone, and began to beat an impatient tattoo with his heels on the frozen earth. The snow fell softly. There was a moon behind the clouds, and a weird dull half-light lay over the barren hill, up which the angry roar of the sea boomed at intervals. Kave waited.

Presently he heard a flying step, a panting breath, and a girl, wrapped in a tattered red shawl, rushed up the narrow path, and stopped suddenly before him. He arose with a thrill which was half of relief and half of fear—absolute fear.

"Hallo!" stammered Kave, "you are late, Polly!"

The red shawl fell back from a wild, tragic face, white as death, in spite of her breathless run, and lighted by a pair of splendid gray eyes, as fierce and bright as a hawk's. Over her shoulders streamed a great mass of hair, half out of braid—silky, lustrous locks, of the darkest shade of gold. She might have been sixteen—certainly not older. Her dress was coarse and shabby; she had a neglected, untamed air, a defiant, threatening manner, but about her exceeding beauty there could be no question.

"Dad is sick," she said, standing as motionless and stern as the gibbet-stone itself. "I couldn't come sooner. So you got the message I sent you?"

"Yes," he answered, in an aggrieved tone. "It's an uncommon bad night for a meeting on this hill, Polly! Well, out with it!" Bracing himself stoutly: "What do you wish to say to me? I hope old Jack is not bad. Can I do anything for him? Perhaps you would like to buy him a Christmas gift—By Jove! I quite forgot—I ought to have brought you something of the sort myself."

He stopped, for her superb eyes had become like bale-fires in her colorless face. She clinched her hands convulsively in her scarlet shawl.

"No!" she answered, mad excitement and stern repression struggling in her voice; "you can do nothing for dad—he wants none of your Christmas gifts—no more do I. What's Christmas to him or to me? I sent for you to come here to-night, because I must know the meaning of some things I've heard talked about lately among the fishing-folks."

"What things?" faltered Kave.

Her breath came thick and short.

"Long ago you told me your mother wanted you to marry a rich heiress—some ward of her own—a Miss Tudor—do you remember? I hear she's stopping at Holmwood. I saw you riding with her yesterday—a dark girl, dressed like a queen." She laughed bitterly. "You've not been at the shanty for two weeks. Old English Jack's daughter, with her rags and tatters, begins to weary you. I might have known months ago how that would be. But there's another thing I've heard. Holmwood is full of guests and grand preparations. The gossip says—but no!" striking her breast wildly; "I can't tell you—it's too much!"

His high, handsome head drooped a little. He dug his heel sulkily into the fresh-fallen snow. Never before, in all his easy, careless days, had Nigel Kave felt such a pang of guilt and remorse as assailed him at this moment.

"Better make a clean breast of it, Polly!"

She laid her cold, brown hand upon his arm.

"Well, then," she said, slowly, "to-morrow, the White Raven folks say, you are going to marry your mother's ward, Miss Tudor!"

No answer.

The wind tore across dreary Gibbet Hill; a ghastly gleam of moonlight shot from the clouds and fell on the tense, white face of the girl, on the shamed, downcast one of the man. His utter silence thrilled her with horror and amazement.

"Why do you not speak?" she demanded. "Only the guilty keep still when they are accused. Great God! Nigel Kave, it cannot be true!"

Concealment was no longer possible. As well have this matter out with her now as at some later day. He made a weak attempt to defend himself.

"You see, my mother would give me no peace, Polly. By Jove! you don't know what it is to have a woman nagging you late and early, and threatening to cut you off with a shilling. I've more than once explained to you how my father left his fortune entirely to her, thereby making me

the slave of all her caprices. Under such circumstances, could I do otherwise than keep my passion for you a secret? I am a weak coward, a contemptible scoundrel! You cannot despise me more than I despise myself."

She shook with sudden terror.

"Is it true, Nigel?" she urged, wildly—"is it true?"

"It is true!" he answered, recklessly. "I may as well own it. To-morrow morning, at ten sharp, I shall marry Miss Tudor."

She stood as if changing to stone. Her white, beautiful face, in the shadow of its wind-tossed hair, assumed an utterly dazed, stunned look.

"You! Am I going mad, Nigel?" she said, hoarsely. "Can a man have two wives? Are you not married already, and to me?"

His tawny young face, usually so cool and careless, had grown as pale as her own.

"For heaven's sake, don't make a scene, Polly! I'm awfully sorry, but there was a mistake. I ought to have told you before, but I couldn't. No, I am not married to you!"

She staggered as if she had received a blow.

"What do you mean?"

"Polly, Polly! don't look like that! Be reasonable. It's a cursed scrape. You remember the night, three months or more ago, when you consented to a secret marriage, and I rowed you by moonlight to Haggett's Beach, where the camping-meeting was? You remember the traveling preacher I found there—the man who made us one?"

"Yes!" she breathed, rather than spoke. "Go on!"

"Well, shortly after, I chanced to hear that the fellow had no right to marry anybody, that he was an impostor—no preacher at all, in fact—and so my union with you cannot be legal; that goes without saying. When I made the miserable discovery, Polly, I promised my mother that I would marry Miss Tudor."

He dared not look at her. He was not bad or heartless by nature, and his passion for this handsome girl was by no means dead.

"If I am not your wife," said Polly Lawless, in a strange voice, "what am I?"

Penitent, remorseful, he flung himself at her feet.

"Polly, as heaven is my witness, I love you with my whole soul! I would marry you over again this very hour were it not for my mother. But she has set her heart upon Miss Tudor, and hurried forward our marriage with pitiless haste. Should I cross her wishes now, she would cut off my allowance and disown me. What can I do? I am the most miserable dog in existence. I have known no peace since Marcia—confound her!—came to Holmwood. Is it possible for me to make you any reparation, my poor child? I'll settle upon you half of my earthly possessions—I'll buy old Jack a schooner—I'll—"

"Stop!" Her dilated eyes had grown black and terrible, her soft lips were set like iron. Standing over him there in the falling Christmas snow, in the dreary, windy night, she had a dangerous look, like that of some wild creature at bay. "Stop! let me understand you fully. You are ready to thrust me out of your way—you will marry that woman to-morrow, and leave me to my fate?"

"I must, Polly! It is not a matter of choice, but of necessity. My word is given—everything is arranged. Moreover, I need money—I have debts, and they must be paid. My mother will do the handsome thing by me when I gratify her darling wish. Polly, Polly! do not tell me that I will make any reparation in the power of man!"

A wild laugh broke from her livid lips.

"Coward! traitor! I wish you joy! A merry Christmas to you and to your bride, Nigel Kave! The reparation that I ask for and that I will have is—this!"

He was still kneeling at her feet, his handsome young face upturned in the gray light. With a swift movement she flung back her tattered red shawl. There was a gleam of something steely and bright, a flash, one startling report, followed by another and another, and Nigel Kave uttered a cry, and, like a log, fell straight back against the old gibbet-stone.

She stood for a moment, petrified with horror at her own deed. Then she bent over the prostrate man. His face was hidden in the snow. She raised it quickly—it was livid and set; the half-open eyes shone under the sinking lids in a horrible, ghastly way.

He did not stir, he did not breathe. She put her hand to his heart. Something oozing there, warm and wet, made her start back.

"Great God, I have killed him!" gasped Polly Lawless.

And, snatching up the still smoking revolver, she turned and fled.

At the foot of the hill she met two men—fishing folks, as she knew by their rough dress and loud, hearty voices. She ran up to them.

"There's a man lying dead by the old gibbet!" she cried, and then went on.

The sea was roaring madly along the shingle. She turned a bend in the rocky, irregular shore, and stopped before a low, black, solitary fishing-shanty.

The door was unlocked. She opened it, and stepped into a room lighted by a driftwood fire and one oil-lamp, which smoked and flared on a rude deal table. In one corner stood an old sea-chest, in another a bunk was built against the wall. A pen-jacket and nor-wester hung on a peg by the door. Across the narrow window, which rattled wildly in the gusts from sea, a coarse curtain was drawn. Dreary poverty reigned in this house. No Christmas cheer here—no merriment, English Jack, as he was called by his fellows, and this wild, golden-haired girl, never kept Christmas. She opened the sea-chest, and flung into it the revolver—old Jack's property, appropriated by her an hour before for the purpose of wreaking vengeance on her faithless lover. Then she went up to the bunk, wherein a motionless form was lying, and turned back the patchwork coverlid from the pinched and grizzled face.

A middle-aged man, wasted now by sickness, with iron-gray hair matted about his sunken temples, and his breath coming in gasps through his

discolored lips. He was sleeping, just as she had left him. Polly seated herself at the foot of the bunk, and, clasping her hands about her knees, rocked back and forth in silent, sombre agony.

What had she done? Murdered the man whom she loved more than her own life—the man who had enticed her into a secret marriage, only to deceive and forsake her for another woman.

"I was no mate for him," she muttered. "He was born to riches and honor; but I—what am I?" She cast a bitter glance around the shanty.

"I might have known his love for one like me could not last. He's dead! I have killed him! There'll be no wedding to-morrow—no Christmas merry-making. Miss Tudor will have to look for another husband. Mine she cannot have; thank heaven for that! Better that he should be dead than belong to her. They will hang me, no doubt, as they hung the sailors on Gibbet Hill. I don't care! I don't care!" Then she flung her arms suddenly over her head. "Oh, my darling! Oh, my darling!" she cried, bursting into a storm of the wildest sobs that ever shook a human frame.

Presently she stopped, and looked at her brown right hand. It was smeared with blood. She ran to a bucket of water, and hurriedly washed away the telltale stain. By this time they had carried him to Holmwood—to his lady-mother, to his promised bride. Probably the great house was now full of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Maybe the officers of the law were already on the track of the slayer. She listened, but heard nothing save the angry sea without, and the hoarse breathing of the sick man within. Once she crept to the door, and peered forth in anxious terror, but only the white snow and the black water were visible.

Hour after hour went by. Still Polly sat by the rude bunk, waiting for she knew not what. English Jack had grown restless. His bony hands moved convulsively outside the coverlid; delirious mutterings escaped his lips.

"Cold falls the snow, the rough winds blow,  
All in the Christmas morning.  
There's woeing and suing and much undoing,  
All in the Christmas morning."

Polly leaned over him.

"Are you awake, dad? Do you want anything?"

No, he was not awake; but he continued to groan and whisper. She listened.

"Peace on earth, good-will to men," Who said that? I care nothing for preaching parsons or their texts. Has she come yet? The word I sent ought to bring her from the ends of the earth. Hark! I hear the thrushes and starlings singing, and the blackthorn is all in flower. No, it's Christmas snow. I'll enter by the window. The child is there—asleep—under the holly and mistletoe."

Of what was he raving? She knew not; but it was plain his mind had gone back to his English home—that home of which he rarely or never spoke to her. The next moment he had fallen again into a stupor.

Unable longer to bear her own thoughts, Polly arose softly, snatched up her shawl, and ran out of the shanty. Up the beach she went, and into the town. Midnight was now at hand. The snow still fluttered down, the wind still blew. Whitehaven, for the most part, was asleep. Polly stumbled through the gathering drifts, turned into the open gate of Holmwood, and flew up the drive under the groaning trees.

Ah, the inmates of this house were not sleeping! Lights flashed hither and thither; the shadows of hurrying figures came and went across the windows. Like some haggard spectre, Polly sprang upon the terrace. The curtains of the drawing-room had not been drawn. Reckless of consequences, she flattened her white face against the frosty glass, and looked in.

The roaring fire still flashed merrily over all the rich dark splendor of bronze and velvet, burl and mahogany, and showed her the Christmas roses in the vases and the holly wreaths on the wall. The room was vacant, but even as her eyes wandered over it a *portière* was lifted, and Marcia Tudor entered.

Her pretty brunette face had lost all its color and sparkle. Her eyes were swollen and red, as if from violent weeping. She began to walk back and forth across the rich carpet, wringing her jeweled hands, and sobbing under her breath. The window was fast. Polly could not open it; but unable to contain herself at last, she rapped loudly on the pane.

"Is he dead?" she cried. "Is he dead?"

Miss Tudor turned, saw that white face in its setting of flying hair and tattered shawl, and uttered a shriek of terror.

The sound brought Polly to her senses. The instinct of self-preservation stirred within her. She sprang from the terrace, and rushed away down the drive.

At the end of a few yards she looked back, and saw a stout, elderly muffled figure puffing after her through the snow. She recognized the Whitehaven surgeon, and waited for him to come up. He gave a nervous start at sight of her.

"Heaven bless my soul! How you frightened me! Why, it's Polly—Polly Lawless. What are you doing here, girl? Is the old man worse?"

She came close up to him, the snow falling on her uncovered head, her great eyes shining like moons.

"Dad is well enough," she answered, hoarsely, as she pointed up to the great house. "Tell me—tell me about him."

The doctor eyed her severely. Of late, the name of this handsome creature had been coupled with Nigel Kave's to a damaging extent.

"My poor child," he said, dryly, "you had better go home and attend to your father."

She grasped his arm violently.

"Tell me about him, I say! Why are you at Holmwood? Can you bring dead men back to life?"

"Mr. Kave is not dead. He still breathes," said the doctor. "He has met with a shocking accident. That is all there is to tell."

She gave a shrill, strange laugh.

"Accident?"

"Yes; he was conscious just five minutes after he was brought home. He distinctly said, 'It was an



accident. I charge you all to bear witness to these words after my death. Let no one be suspected. It was an accident. I did it myself. Since then he has been insensible."

A two-edged sword seemed driving through the girl's heart. His last conscious thought had been to shield her.

"You say he still breathes?" she cried, fiercely. "Oh, save him! What is your art good for if you cannot save him?"

"You absurd child," answered the doctor, irritably: "he will be dead as a door-nail before the dawn of Christmas morning. Doctors cannot perform miracles. I call it a most mysterious affair—"

She waited for nothing more, but shot through the gate, and was gone in an instant down the windy street.

An agony of remorse, a flood-tide of reviving passion suddenly swallowed up all her anger, all her burning sense of wrong. She reached a railroad crossing. A late train was just thundering into Whitehaven. The great headlight of the engine glared like a Cyclops eye in the storm; the cars flashed and rumbled after. Polly watched them, little dreaming of the Christmas gift they were bringing to her. She felt a mad impulse to fling herself under those grinding iron wheels, and so put an end to the pain which was wringing her heart; but the thought of old Jack Lawless restrained her. The train puffed on into the station, and a few minutes later Polly had reached the shanty on the beach.

As she opened the door she saw that her father was awake. He had lifted himself to his elbow, and was gazing around the low, poor room, as if in search of some one. A change had come over his face. It looked more drawn and pinched than ever, but consciousness had returned to it, and reason.

"Polly, is that you?" he faltered.

She shook the snow from her coarse garments, and advanced to the bunk.

"Yes, dad. I've been out for a run on the beach. It's time for the medicine again."

She poured a draught, and would have held it to his lips, but he pushed it away. A great excitement shone in his hollow eyes, and quivered over his haggard face.

"No. I want no more doctor's stuff. I'm a-sinking fast, Polly. Come nearer. It was the train that woke me, screeching into Whitehaven. I wonder if it has brought her? 'Twould be mortal queer if she should happen along to-night."

"She—who?" queried Polly, blankly.

He pressed his rough hand to his head.

"I've sent for a lady to visit us, my lass—a lady from over the sea. Oh, Lord! it's a long journey, but she'll come—nothing but death can keep her."

"Dad, dad, what are you talking about?" cried Polly, startled into something like interest.

He stared in a weak, bewildered way, around the room.

"I'm a-going fast, I say. I may be gone afore she gets here—I mean, your mother!"

"My mother! I have none. She died years ago," said the girl, in amazement.



A CHRISTMAS IDYL.—"HE HAS BEEN HERE!"

"No. That was the lie I had to tell to keep you from asking awkward questions, lass. Ah, God knows I've wronged you sorely. And you've been a good daughter to me always."

She thought he was raving. She stroked his poor face remorsefully, and answered:

"Have I? Oh, I'm afraid not, dad! I've kept things from you. I've deceived you again and again—"

"Tut—tut! What do sins like yours signify, Polly? The talking to that young Kave, when I forbid it, the meeting with him on the beach, and such like? It's black ones, like mine, that weigh heavy!" and he gave a deep groan. Polly leaned over him. Would the horrors of this Christmas Eve ever cease?

"Dear dad," she said, in a soothing tone, "I'm afraid the delirium is coming back."

"No," he answered, firmly, "my head's clear. I know what I'm about. Give me that brandy-

bottle on the table—it's worth all the doctor's drugs. Now, I'm going to tell you a story, Polly. Lord, Lord, how I wish she would come!"

He paused in a listening attitude, with eyes fixed on the door, but nothing was heard save the roar of the sea, and the noise of the wind driving the snow against the shanty.

"Seventeen years or more ago," began Jack Lawless, turning his hollow eyes darkly on the girl, "far away in England—a country that you know nothing about, lass—looking after the few hares and pheasants of a small, poor, Devon manor, lived a gamekeeper, called Gypsy Jack. He had Romany blood in his veins, and a good deal of Romany devil in his heart, and, worst of all, he fell in love with a lady of quality, a pretty young creature, with not a shilling on earth, but plenty of pride and pedigree, mind—in short, his master's daughter. Because she was kind and condescending to him, as she was to everybody, this black-

browed idiot fancied that he could win her, and he went on nursing the delusion, until one day—Lord love you!—a fine lover appeared at the manor—handsome, well-born, and eager to marry. Well, what did the fool do then, lass? Why, he went mad with rage and jealousy. That same night, he came upon the young lady in a walk of yew-trees near the old house, and there was a scene. He had made a mistake, you see, and the minute he began to talk of love to her, she overwhelmed him with scorn and wrath. A good deal was said that better have been left unsaid. She turned the lover that would have died for her into a devil who swore then and there to take a devil's vengeance on her, whenever the chance should come. He was no nice gentleman—this Gypsy Jack—and he got a little rude, and she screamed, and lo! her fine lover steps out from among the trees, and knocks the gamekeeper senseless. It was a blow that both paid dear for at a later day.

"Well, of course, Jack lost his place, and he went up to London, and fell in bad company, and the next Christmas Eve the young lady he both loved and hated married her heart's choice, and went to live in Kent. After a while Jack heard that a child had been born to her—a daughter.

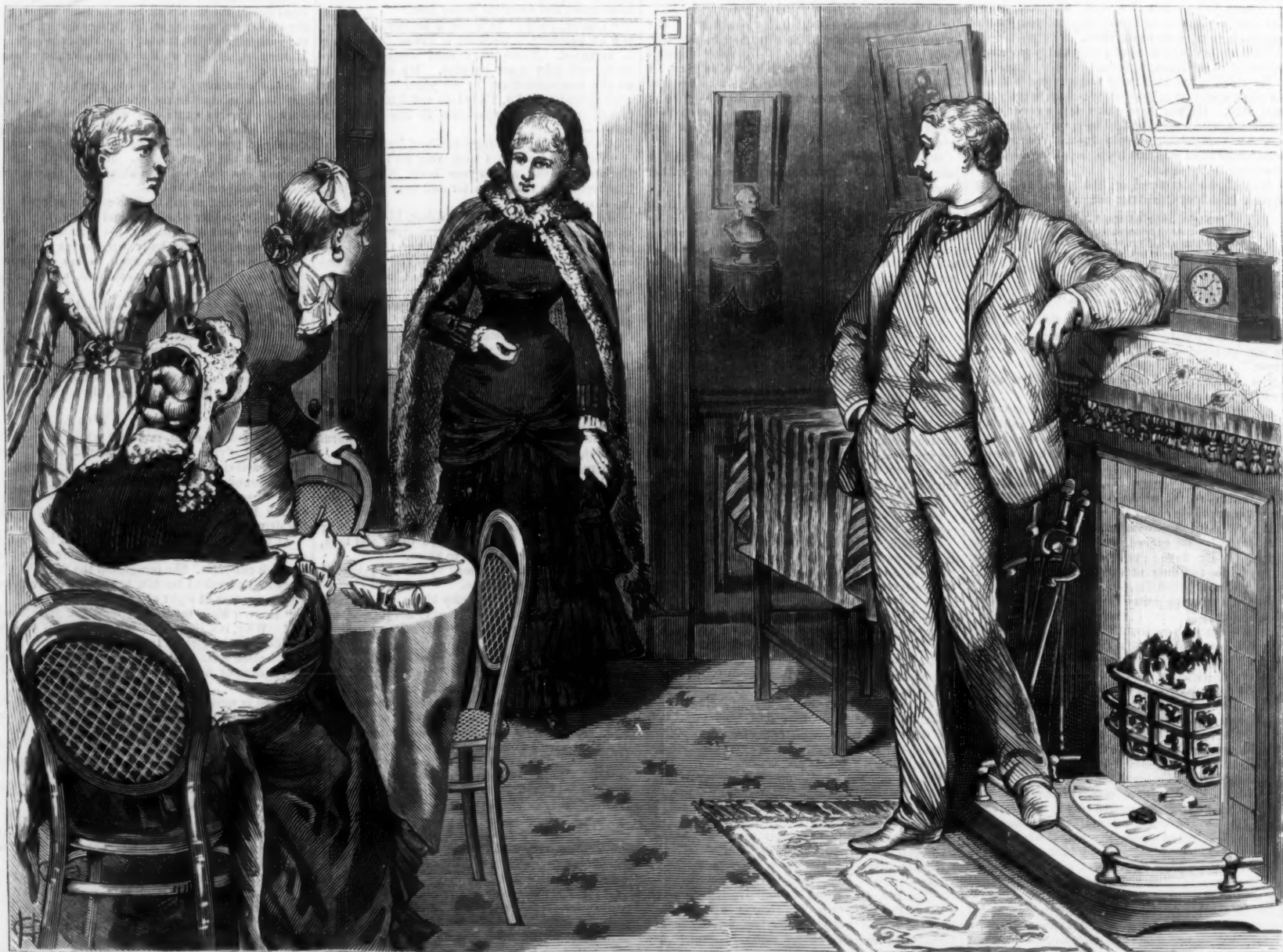
"Are you listening, Polly? Pauline you was christened, after your mother, but I like Polly better. The second Christmas following that marriage, Jack dressed himself in woman's toggery, and tramped off to find the nest of the happy pair. He reached it late at night. My lord and lady had gone to a Christmas ball, and the lackeys were all making merry in the servants' hall. Jack climbed a Spanish chestnut-tree that grew convenient to the nursery-window, and saw the little kid lying asleep on a lace pillow, under a silken coverlid, watched only by one stupid maid. 'Twas no time for ceremony, so he just flung up the easement, rapped the girl on the head, caught up the young one, and made off with her, still sleeping, all as easy and nice as you please.

"Well, rewards were offered, and detectives set to work, and all that; but Jack lay low in London till the hue-and-cry was over, then he sailed for Canada, and the little one with him, dressed in rags, like a beggar's child.

"I'm a widower," says he, "and this toddler belongs to me. Nobody doubted his word, and Polly Lawless you've been from that day to this!"

He paused, gasping for breath. The girl stared at him in stony amaze, but spoke no word.

"Yes, lass," went on the dying man, "I'm Gypsy Jack, and you're the child I stole from that Kent grange, just fifteen years ago this very night. From Canada, you see, I drifted into the States, and set to fishing in these waters. Not long since I had news of your mother from a pal of mine in England. She's a childless widow now, mourning late and early for her dead husband and the daughter that was lost and never found. Another drop of the brandy, girl! When I heard that, and when I felt my strength a-going, I says to myself, 'I've reached the end of my rope! I've got to die, and what will the lass do then? I'd better give her back to her that she belongs to! And so, a



A CHRISTMAS IDYL.—"YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN ME," SAYS THE SAD, SWEET VOICE.—SEE PAGE 283.



few weeks ago I sent a letter, telling my lady to come and take you. Great God! She's had a sore heart for fifteen years. She will come—never fear. Hark!

His death-stricken face had put on a look of mingled fear and expectation. He strained his dull ears to catch some sound outside the shanty. Polly sprang to her feet with a scream.

"Dad, dad, are you telling me the truth?"

"As God hears me, the whole truth, girl. I never had wife or child—you're none of mine—hark! I say! There's somebody at the door."

In awful, breathless silence, Polly listened. Was it the sea she heard, or the sound of horse-hoofs in the snow, the murmur of voices? A hand touched the latch, it was lifted tremulously, and out of the bitter storm, out of the wild, Christmas night, a woman stepped, unannounced, into the shanty.

He started up on his pillow.

"My God! Yes, it is you—fifteen years this very night—you are greatly changed—I swore vengeance—do you remember?—cruel—'twas cruel—poor Polly!"

His voice died in a groan. No further sound came from his paralyzed lips. It was too late to confess wrong or ask pardon. A convulsive shudder shook his gaunt figure. He stretched out one hand, touched Polly, and fell back in his rude bunk, stone dead!

Then the lady in widow's weeds turned and looked at the girl—a look beyond all words to describe. Something she saw in that beautiful, breathless face that struck conviction to her very heart. She opened her arms. Polly ran into them with a great cry.

"Mother!—oh, are you my mother?"

purse—that lady—and she was of the real quality. She left plenty of money for the burial, but she just whisked Polly off before daylight, and nobody in these parts, I'm thinking, will ever lay eyes on the girl again."

Five years have come and gone. Again it is Christmas Eve—Christmas far away from the bleak New England coast, under the intensely blue sky of the South, among the palms and orange trees of Nice.

Evening is falling on the blue Mediterranean and over the olive-fringed hills, the snow-capped Alps and the gay town, crowded with invalids and pleasure-seekers from every civilized nation of earth. Christmas always brings fine weather to the Riviera. There is not a cloud in the heavens, the afternoon mistral has died away, the air is like

and useless thing. Kave has grown old and stern in these five years. There is a look of care and weariness unspeakable in his dark, handsome face. All the old weak carelessness is gone. The experience, from which he barely escaped with life, has sobered and changed the man almost beyond recognition. His companion, a young Englishman, is gazing around with amused eyes.

"Gad! old boy," he says, "it looks little like an English Christmas, eh? Behold the scene! Have we stumbled on fairyland? I hope your republican pocket is well filled. We shall not escape from this snare with a single sou."

They have reached a bazaar, flooded with gaslight and thronged with people. Rich strains of music fill the air. Great booths, ablaze with the golden fire of Venetian lamps, display wares of every description. Fair attendants—yellow-haired



A NEW SUIT FOR CHRISTMAS.—FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY THE BERLIN PHOTOGRAPH COMPANY.—SEE PAGE 290.

A woman who had traveled thousands of weary miles in the hope of finding a long-lost treasure. On her pale, sad face the history of fifteen years of lonely bereavement and heart-sickness was plainly written. She was dressed in deepest black. A long, fur mantle covered her slight figure. Like a spirit she glided into the low, poor New England room, where that man lay gasping in death, where that girl, in her splendid panther-like beauty, stood waiting for the Christmas gift of a mother, whose very existence she had been ignorant of one little hour before.

She walked straight up to the bunk—this black-robed woman—her anxious, questioning eyes met the wild, dying ones of English Jack.

"You sent for me, and I have come," she said. "Now, where is my child?"

"I am your mother! My child, my poor defrauded child!"

In the cold, clear Christmas morning Marcia Tudor opened the low door and entered the shanty on the beach. She found no one there but an old fisherman watching by the stark body of English Jack.

"I wish to see the girl called Polly Lawless!" said Miss Tudor, haughtily.

"She's gone, miss," answered the man.

"Gone! whither?"

"That's what I don't know. A lady came here last night and claimed Polly for her own darter, and took her away. It seems she wasn't old Jack's girl at all—I always suspected there was something queer in the fellow's past life. She had a full

balm. In the villa gardens roses are blowing. Along the Promenade des Anglais palms wave and lights shine from the windows of the club-houses. The Place de la Poissonière is gay with showy carriages. A Babel of tongues resounds on all sides. It is a festive night in Nice—the coming of the world's great holiday is being celebrated in this Southern Eden with joyful enthusiasm.

Two men stroll up from the Quai Massena and enter the square, where the statue of the French hero looks gravely down on stranger multitudes. One of the twain is an American, tawny, stalwart, yet with an appearance of ill-health. His left arm hangs paralyzed by his side. Nigel Kave has never used that arm since the tragic night, five years ago, when Polly Lawless's bullet struck the bone and made it ever more a dead

English girls; Russian dames of title; high-born French and Australian beauties, are luring both the wary and unwary to pause and buy. "Charity holds a Christmas fair here in aid of the Szegedin sufferers, or something of that sort," says Villiers, the Englishman.

Kave follows him into a Turkish kiosk, where the air is heavy with attar of roses, and an English peeress, attired like a Sultana, in strings of pearls and yellow satin, stiff with embroidery, dispenses flasks of perfume and porcelain cups of black coffee flavored with rose-water. A wonderful Chinese dame, in red Canton silk, with gold pins in her hair, and her yard-wide sleeves, edged with jewels, sells fans and lacquer-work in the next booth. The dazzling gas-jets and colored lanterns, the flags and streamers, the laughter and



confusion of tongues, the superb colors and fantastic decorations bewilder Kave. He is a stranger in Nice. As he passes the Chinese lady, she holds out to him an enormous fan, decorated with a flock of rice-birds.

"Will monsieur buy?" she pleads. "It is for the cause of charity!"

He flings down the money she demands, takes his fan and is moving on, when his eyes fall suddenly upon something that sends a mad thrill through every vein in his body.

It is a flower-stall, draped in vines—a perfect bower of roses and heliotropes and burning carnations. Christmas wreaths and crosses are on the counter, and behind it stands a girl of twenty or thereabouts, dressed in some thick, shining white stuff, with a necklace and girdle of Mediterranean violets. Her face is like a calla lily. She has blonde hair and wide gray eyes, with brows and lashes as black as ink. Kave sees a proud, red mouth, a creamy throat, a pair of half-veiled arms, like marble, and he turns as white as chalk.

"In God's name, who is that?" he says to Villiers, and his Chinese fan falls, crushed and broken, to the earth.

"The handsomest creature in Nice," answers the Englishman—"one of my own country women—Miss Pauline Darrow. Her mother, the widow of a baronet, is an invalid, and has come to the Riviera for her health. Bless me! Kave, what's the matter? You're shaking like a leaf!"

"Darrow!" echoes Nigel Kave, like a dazed man, "I do not know the name, and yet, great heaven, it is her face! I beg your pardon, Villiers—the young lady strongly resembles a person I once saw, years ago, in America!"

"Indeed! Gd! you're uncommonly fortunate to have seen anything like her in any country!" sighs Villiers. "I've heard some romantic story about her having been stolen in infancy, and brought up in a foreign country, but I dare say, it's pure fiction—Lady Darrow always frowns at the least allusion to it. This *be la*, Pauline, has lovers by the score. Look at that fellow elbowing his way to her stall. That's a Russian prince—has offered himself again and again, and refuses to take 'No' for an answer."

Stern and white, Kave stands and stares at the Russian—a good-looking youth.

"Bearded like a pard," he leans on the counter with his heart in his eyes, and speaks in French to the handsome flower-girl.

"Your hands have touched all these wreaths and crosses, mademoiselle?"

"Yes, monsieur," answers Miss Darrow, with a faint, cold smile.

"I will take them—every one!"

He signs to a servant. In a moment the counter is swept bare. Then Miss Darrow unclasps her necklace and girdle of violets and lays them in the vacant place.

"In the name of charity!" she says.

Nigel Kave makes one stride forward. Is he asleep or awake? Is this fair woman the poor, wronged, desperate Polly Lawless, who so nearly closed his earthly career on wild Gibbet Hill just five years before? Is it Christmas Eve, and does he stand among palms and lights and flowers, face to face with her once more, or are all these things but the delusions of a disordered brain? He puts his one sound hand upon the necklace and girdle.

"Name your price, mademoiselle," he says.

She starts—for the first time she sees him, and it seems as if the beautiful Miss Darrow is about to faint. Her gray eyes dilate with mingled horror and amazement, as they flash over his tall form, his dark, agitated face, and rest, at last, on his crippled, helpless arm. It is not a dead, but a living man who stands before her. The Russian prince glares angrily at the stranger and cries:

"Let mademoiselle offer the flowers to the highest bidder."

That brings her to herself. She is again the deft saleswoman of a charity bazaar. There are a dozen competitors for the violets, but Kave and the Russian are the foremost. The contest waxes hot between this pair. It is Kave who triumphs at last. He throws down a thousand francs and takes up the girdle and the necklace.

"These Americans have long purses," sneers the Russian.

Five minutes after Miss Darrow has vanished from the stall, and a pretty French marquise, dressed like a Florentine peasant, urges the sweet cause of charity in her stead.

As Kave and his friend leave the bazaar, the former says:

"To-morrow, Villiers, you must make Miss Darrow a Christmas call, and take me with you."

"By Jove! that's awfully cool!" answers Villiers. "I have heard that Lady Darrow detests Americans—no, perhaps, does the daughter. I am not sure that you would be welcome."

"All the same, I shall call," replied Kave, calmly smelling his dear-bought violets. "I have something of importance to say to these country-women of yours."

In sunshine and balm Christmas Day comes to Nice. Reluctant but unresisting, Villiers leads the way to the Darrow villa—a lovely spot, surrounded by lemon and orange-trees, with glimpses of olive hills and sparkling sea and snowy Alps on every side. Lady Darrow is ill in her own room and cannot see visitors. Miss Darrow is in the garden. To the garden go Villiers and his friend.

"And ten to one," mutters the former, "we shall find that much-bewhiskered Russian with her."

In a grotto, shady with stately aloes and bright with laughing fountains and trailing vines, through which flowering geraniums hold up torches of fire, they discover Miss Darrow. She is dressed in black satin and yellow Mechlin lace, and, in honor of the day, a sprig of English holly is pinned to her corsage. A black Gainsborough hat shades her yellow hair and heightens the fairness of her face. In a bored, depressed way she leans against a piece of rockwork, and at her feet kneels the Russian.

"I love you, mademoiselle," he cries, passionately; "do not say me nay again—make me happy upon this good day."

She draws back, weary and scornful. Her lips quiver, as if with suppressed pain.

"You ask that which is impossible!" she answers, sadly. "I can marry no man!"

"But why?" he urges—"mademoiselle, tell me why?"

Nigel Kave pushes back the shrubbery, and stands before the pair.

"Because she already has a husband," he thunders. "I am he!" Then, as the Russian leaps to his feet, he adds, "Go, monsieur! I wish to speak to my wife alone!"

The Russian goes. Villiers also—dumb with amazement—beats a hasty retreat. Miss Darrow and Kave stand alone together in the Christmas sunshine.

"It is the truth!" he says, defiantly—"you are my wife! That night on Gibbet Hill, I believed from my soul that our marriage was null and void, but at a later day, I searched for and found the man who united us—found that he was a genuine clergyman, and that the ceremony had been legally performed. For years I have been seeking you to tell you this. You are mine till the divorce court separates us in proper form."

With golden head thrown back, and black, shining figure drawn up to its full height, she looks at him with scornful eyes.

"And you dare to claim me?" she cries—"you! who cast me off five years ago; you, who would have married another woman; you, who drove me to despair and madness and murder!"

"I have nothing to say for myself," he answers. "I was a weak, cowardly villain—it would have been but common justice had you destroyed me, as you intended. Yet I have suffered for my sin—I shall suffer till my dying day!"

She looks at his pale, worn face and paralyzed arm.

"Is that my work?" she says, slowly.

"Yes! and it's a thousand pities, Pauline, that your aim was not truer—a thousand pities that you should have missed my heart by only a few inches," he answers, bitterly.

Both faces are like death; both hearts are beating like trip-hammers.

"Miss Tudor and your mother," she says.

"Where are they?"

"Miss Tudor is married; my mother is dead!"

She is silent for a moment, then she says proudly, "I have found home and relatives and fortune since our last meeting at Whitehaven. Polly Lawless, her wretched life, her mistakes and sorrows, seem now to me like a hideous dream."

"No doubt. The fortunate can afford to be magnanimous; can they not, Pauline? For years the thought of you has embittered my whole life—I have hungered long for your forgiveness—grant it to me now—it is all I dare ask of you!" He kneels humbly before her, as he once knelt on Gibbet Hill. "Be generous—say that I am pardoned—it will be something for me to remember in the years to come, when I can see your face no more!"

There is desperate pain in his voice. She trembles, her breath grows short.

"Have mercy!" he pleads. "I love you, and I have lost you forever—is not that punishment enough? This is Christmas, the time of peace—let there be peace between us, as we part—for part we must, I know that only too well!"

She turns her face from this man who has made her suffer cruelly, and who has also suffered much through her. He waits, but she utters no word, makes no sign.

"You will not?" he groans, at last. "You begrudge me even this consolation. Well, then, good-by, Pauline, and God bless you!"

He staggers to his feet and walks blindly down the nearest path. Only a few steps, then she is at his side.

"Oh, Nigel! my husband!" she falters. "Yes, I forgive everything! Have I not wellnigh destroyed you; have I not need of forgiveness myself?"

He turned with a cry. He sees the look in her face, and the next instant the two are in each other's arms.

Verily, love can pardon all things!

Pauline Darrow still loves this man, and for the sake of the infinite passion and remorse which fill his eyes and blanch his lips, she is content to forget the past, and receives him again to her heart of hearts.

"Come to my mother," she says, at last, as she lifts her head, with a long sigh, from his breast. "She knows our story—she will welcome you as a son, because she must, Nigel."

And so, under the orange-trees, with the happy Christmas sun shining down upon them, they go up to the villa together.

#### "A NEW SUIT FOR CHRISTMAS."

IN this pleasant scene of homely German life, where the Christmas Tree has been duly prepared with its lanterns or tapers all ready to be lighted, and with its appointed gifts for the gratification of each member of the happy family, we behold the entrance of a bright, young person, Master Fritz, or Karl, or whatever his name, who is attired in a new suit of clothes for the festive occasion. Such boys have we seen in American homes, not less elated in spirit by the consciousness of a similar improvement in their outward covering, more especially at that momentous stage of first wearing the breeches, the trousers, or the "knickerbockers," which comes to male mankind once in a lifetime, with the sensation of advanced dignity, as a foretaste of the masterly prerogatives of their sex. The mother, or nurse, who has dressed this cheerful youngster in such a becoming fashion, seems little inclined to reprove his juvenile exhibition of personal vanity; and the kind old grandmother, as she looks up from the Bible to greet his approach, is delighted with the brave little man. We are not equally sure of the approval of his little sister, refraining as she does from a glance of admiring curiosity, and devoting her whole attention to the unconscious doll which is fondled in her lap. She may have her private opinion that "Brother" thinks too much of himself, and that men and boys, in general, are too apt to give themselves the air of Lords of Creation. As for the dog, we should like best of all to know his mind upon the subject, but the reader is quite as well able as we are to interpret the wondering wistfulness of his look, and the subdued agitation of his

bushy tail. The father's old jacket, hanging beside the door, might be pointed to as a reminder that this urchin will not very often get a new suit of clothes, and that he must learn betimes to work for his own needs.

#### CHRISTMAS NIGHT.

THE old wolf squats on her haunches thin,  
In the mountain path where fir-trees grow,  
While Christmas bells make merry din  
In the red-roofed town below.

Her fangs are keen, and her coat is gray,  
And her eyes are red with hellish light;  
In the ice and snow of the frozen way  
She waits this festive night—

Waits for a step, and the merry sound  
Of a strong voice, lifting an old love tune,  
And a shadow cast on the flinty ground  
Under the Christmas moon.

The black firs stand in a solemn row,  
The white frost glistens, the hour grows late,  
But the old wolf there, in her lair of snow,  
Watches, as stern as Fate.

Like a stag, he climbs the frozen fall,  
Under the crag his fleet foot rings;  
In the shade of the firs, so thick and tall,  
This is the song he sings:

'In yon sky the Christmas star,  
Like thy sweet eyes, shines afar,  
Birgit, Birgit, maid adored!  
As the brown bark to the tree,  
Leaves thy lover's heart to thee,  
As the blue mist to the sea,  
As the scabbard round the sword!  
Through the Christmas dance to-night  
Thou didst move, a dream of light,  
Fairest of the village maids.  
For thy love I wait, my sweet,  
Like the hills for Summer's heat,  
Like the wild deer for the glades—  
Yea, I wait, I sigh forlorn,  
As the forest for the leaf,  
As the darkness for the morn,  
As the valleys for the corn,  
As the garner for the sheaf.  
Heed my sorrow, heed my sighs,  
Melts my soul beneath thine eyes,  
As the glacier 'neath the sun.  
Birgit, Birgit, unto thee,  
Like the brown brooks to the sea,  
All my thoughts and wishes run.'

With shudder and shriek the wind goes by,  
In fringes gray the tan clouds float,  
Across the moon, and the black firs sigh,  
And the old wolf leaps at his throat!

And maiden Birgit, in happy mood,  
Sleeps on in the red-roofed town below—  
Sleeps, knowing not that her lover's blood  
Reddens the Christmas snow!

ETTA W. PIERCE.

#### THE LAW OF LOVE.

By Annie J. Duffell.

IT was only a woman—a dying woman—and after the first shock the crowd surges on. But I—I cannot take my gaze from the pallid face, as she lies upon the platform, whither they have dragged her, crushed and mangled, from the car-wheels. But when somebody throws a sheet over her I turn to my friends, who have just alighted from the London express. There is a swift din of aristocratic voices as we go towards the two carriages in waiting, then a sudden pause, as our guests perceive that long form prostrate upon the platform.

"Is it not horrible?" cries Lady Agathe, in her sweet, high treble. "A drunken woman—she got run over. And—will you believe it?—I came within an inch of the same fate myself. I dropped my pocketbook in crossing the track from the carriage. In stooping to pick it up I was seized with a deadly faintness, and almost lost consciousness. The rest of the party had moved on without noticing me. People shouted at me, but I could not move. Suddenly something fell against me with such force that it pushed me off the track. It must have been this poor creature. You see, the train was right up on us, and, being intoxicated, she could not save herself, and so got under the wheels."

"It was fortunate for you, Agathe, that the poor wretch should have stumbled upon you; it saved your life!" says Fane Swinton—her husband's friend. There is a queer, pale look about his face, unnatural to it. But Lady Agathe's lovely countenance bears no trace of any emotion at her narrow escape from death.

That was an hour ago. I stand now beside a cot in the hospital, whither I have followed the victim of that accident—it being impossible for me to subdue the intense interest her appearance inspired in me. This ward is very silent—it being only used for cases of the worst order, and, happily, of these there are few—this Christmas Eve. I sit and look at the dying woman. She is scarcely more than a girl; and though her limbs are terribly mangled, her face is utterly untouched. It is a little brown, winsome face, though pitifully hollow about the eyes and the cheeks, and with a downward drooping of pathos and pain around the corners of the lips, that sends an ache to my throat as I look—a face that seems to speak of the burn and the byre, the meadow and the hills, of a distant and forsaken home—of old safe ways from which she has strayed a pitiful distance—of a nook and a chair and hearts that are vacant around a desolate hearth! Somehow the tears rise to my eyes as I watch that face, doubtless once so bonnie and so brown; I think it must be the worn, piteous look of it that causes them, and that persistent

association with running waters, in which cattle stand hock-deep, of the girl lying upon the bank amid the cowslip and the wild thyme, and of the linnet-song that pours from her lips as the kine come home. And now she lies before me a mass of mangled flesh, with a brand upon her forehead and her poor little soul, that has strayed a sorry way from the right. Suddenly, as I look, the closed eyes flash wide; they are brown—that same pretty, soft-brown hue of the chestnuts she used to gather, when the early frosts had stained the birchen and the hickory woods, where the gray squirrels gamboled, and the sound of dropping nuts cleft the air. I bend over the little vacant, worn face, far over, until I catch the great wistful light of the death-scoured eyes.

"Do you want anything?" I ask.

"Yes, him!"

"Who! dear?"

"Oh! you don't know. I forget," turning wearily upon the pillow. Then abruptly—"Twenty years ago, to-night, I was born—Christmas Eve. They called me Madelon. And two years ago, to-night, my own baby was born—little Jeanette, after the dear one at home—and to-night I am dying, but I do not regret it: to the end, I have given him my life. To-night I saved the woman of his love."

I start quickly; somehow that white, haggard look on Fane Swinton's countenance returns to me in this moment.

"Did you know Lord Swinton?" I query.

"Yes, I knew him," she replies, with a little pallid smile that has a pathos never held in tears—"I knew him! I met him on the hills at home. I went away with him when he went, for I loved him too well to let him go alone. I have never seen the dear ones since! I came to London. I was happy. I wonder if heaven has such happiness as was mine, then? He promised to marry me, and he would have done so, but he saw Lady Agathe, and he loved her with a love that he never gave me. He tried hard to keep from it at first; he knew his danger. 'Oh, Madelon!' he would say, 'keep me with you—dear little true heart, stay by me! I will not yield to her—I will not!' And he would stagger into my room some night, as though drunk with wine. It was her. She did it—she won him because he was proud and beautiful. They say they do those things in the world to which she belongs: they call it *friendship*! It brings no disgrace. Lady Agathe is very dear to her husband and children. Yet when I begged of her to take me as her servant, hoping that by that I would see him, I was driven from her presence. They told me that I had no honor, no character! Can you understand these things, lady?"

The beautiful, nut-brown eyes look yearningly into mine—the dry, parched lips quiver.

"No," I say, while a great shame for my own caste sweeps me. "I cannot understand them."

"There are some things so strange in life," continues the plaintive voice—strange to say, she seems to be perfectly painless. "Well, he could no longer hold out. She won him from me. Then I went away—I would not take his money when he had no love! I went away; and I have been hungry and cold and homeless. I have been faint and ill and parched with the heat of this terrible city. I have hungered after the dear old home on the hill-side, and the woods and the meadows, with their cowslips and primroses, and the stream that sang from dawn until night, and the sheep that I watched; but oh, dear God! I have been true to him—true to him, though I held no place in his heart. And two years ago to-night my baby came, and from my heart the pain and the ache seemed lifted. I was happy—happy as I had not been since I left the old place. I lay in an attic, and the roof was poor, and it was very cold. But it was not a manger! My baby was in my arms, and I lay and thought of the dear Child that was born so many years ago that night. I liked to feel that I lay like Mary had lain, and through the chinks in the roof I saw the stars, and I wondered which it was that had shown where the Baby was in Judea. And I thought God had sent mine to be a comfort to me. But in the morning officers came and they took the child away. It was not mine any more. They were not brutal; they explained how that the city owned it, and must take care of its poor. They said my shame and dishonor were too great for me to be a suitable guardian for it! How could that be? I was its mother! They took it away. Ah, dear God! I thought I should die! I lay there and I looked out of the roof; but I felt the cold as I had not felt it the night before, and a veil was over the stars! Never again would it lay at my breast—never again upon my ears would fall its wailing cry, or its little limbs nestle at my side! Then like a flash it came to me that Mary, too, had mourned for her Child. Did I suffer as she suffered when she followed her son to Cavalry? Ah! I know how she felt when she saw Him bearing the Cross along that weary, weary way! I know how her heart ached! I know what thoughts came to her of the time when He was a little baby in the manger, with Joseph and her, and the oxen around! You see, we never know what our babies are born for! So it was that that helped me to bear it. But I cannot understand what little the city had to my child."

Again she looks at me questioningly. Her voice is still low and mellow as the thrush's song; as yet no wail of dying agony has pierced it. Her face is calm as the burn that flows through the little hillside farm, though her weary limbs are crushed and torn out of all shape. She is dying—here in the great city, far away from that home she forsook. And while her eyes grow dim and sightless, and the cold dew starts upon her brow, perchance her mother is praying in the solemn silence of this holy night, praying for the prettiest, sunniest child of them all, who has gone out from their lives forever.

"Can you understand why it was not my child?" she whispers. Poor, little wayward soul! to her crude and untutored instincts life with its mystery and mockery is a problem, whose injustice she even yet strives to solve.

No, I cannot tell. I am fast sharing her sophistry. The pandates, the customs, the narrow prejudices of society sink into insignificance before the solemn questioning of those death-filled eyes. I seem to see the divine face of Mary's Son, as He said, "A



new commandment give I unto you: that ye love one another!" Where is that "love," and that "Charity that seeth no evil!" that should have been shown this poor, helpless, friendless one?

"But it doesn't matter, now—the sin is sinned, the pain is over!" she murmurs, in that strange pathos that so surprises me in one of her order. "I know that I am dying. But if only I might—I would like to see him once again!"

"You shall!" I say, while that heavy ache is still at my throat. "Fane Swinton is my brother's son. I have the right to send for him!"

I sit by her side and wait. A solemn, brooding presence fills the room. Outside, the gay world is reveling in its Christmas festivities, and anon a sweet, wild burst of riotous music breaks from without. And amidst it all the girl lies dying. But as the horns and the organs pierce occasionally to her senses that are fast dulling to earthly things, memories of the old, sweet, forgotten time are flung across her. I see her lips move; I bend lower and catch their whispers:

"I have fetched the nuts, mother, and the fire burns bright. See! how the red berries glisten on the wall. And do you hear the sleigh-bells on the hill? They must be coming, mother!" Poor child! for her the hawthorn and the juniper have been hung the last time; and never again will she stand within the walls of her old home, with the Christmas-bells ringing out all over the snowy land.

At last the door opens, and Fane Swinton enters. He comes straight to the cot; and as he sees the poor little, once ruset face, a great cry breaks from him:

"Madelon! Madelon!" But who shall tell the glory, the refulgent radiance that sweeps that dying face as the girl reaches out and takes the strong, warm hand of the man—takes it with her quivering, dark fingers that have strayed so often among the strawberries and wild thyme of those sun-kissed meadow-lands from which he tore her.

"Oh! my dear—my dear!" she whispers, while she presses it to her lips, that are white and dry as dust.

"Don't!" he cries, "it kills me!" Then, after a pause—"But Madelon, believe me! I searched far and wide for you. I would never have allowed you to suffer one pang from bodily want. I—"

"It was not your fortune I wanted!" she interrupts, with a piteous, broken smile. "It was your heart. But we will let that pass. Do you know why I am here to-night?"

"In her note my aunt tells me that you have met with some accident—got run over. Oh! Madelon, this is too shocking!"

"Yes"—slowly—"I got run over in her stead. Can't you guess the rest, Fane? I saw her pause upon the crossing; she seemed not to heed the train that was almost upon her. I know what it is to lose the one you worship! So I pushed her away; I did it, Fane, because you loved her so!" She is broken and mangled, like a crushed fawn—all her poor little limbs shapeless and torn; she has lain herself a living sacrifice upon the altar of her love; the throes of approaching dissolution are beginning to rack her form. But a smile is in her eyes—a smile proud and full of peace! The blight and the sin of those dead years are rolled aside—the spirit, suddenly divested of its weaknesses, has soared upwards to the sublimity of divine love. And from the haughty soul of Fane—Lord Swinton—goes a cry of intolerable anguish and remorse.

"Madelon!" he cries, "poor, little faithful soul! I am not worth the sacrifice!"

But she does not heed his words; earth and its cares have faded from her—her mission is done! She lies there motionless, her small, crushed breast heaving slowly, while the waters surge up and touch her weary, waiting feet. We stand silent, daring not to speak in the presence of this fleeting spirit, with its martyrdom. And as I look downwards into the poor brown eyes, without sight or reason in them, her parched lips move; again I catch the murmur of the "hawthorn" and the "juniper." And I know that in this last solemn moment of all her hurt and weary soul has flown back to her last home, and perchance is communicating with that desolate mother in her lonely night-watch.

Suddenly her hand reaches out in a groping way, and her voice rings clear and sweet:

"I am going, Fane; but I have nothing to fear; a mother stands ready to plead for me with her Son! She knows how all such as I have loved and suffered and lost! It is Mary—Mary, whose Child was crucified!"

One sharp convulsive tightening of the frail fingers which even in death cling to the hand that meted out to her destruction, and the tired spirit lays down its burden. She has gone away—away from the sin and the bondage of life—away, without priest or prayer, but in the dear, sacred tide of the "Christ-mass." And together we stand and look at her clay.

She was only a little, nameless thing, who had watched the sheep on her father's hills, and she had been jostled hither and yon in life, and thrust out as too unclean to mingle with those who styled themselves honest. But as I look into those sightless eyes—as my gaze dwells upon the shapeless mass that is all that remains of the once winsome maiden, I feel that I would rather take her hope of heaven than Agathe's—Lady Vanaburn—whose spotless character has been untouched by her society-friendship, wrapped as she is in the rank and prestige of her Norman lord. Far be it from me to say that this poor dead one was guileless; but what I claim for her is this: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone at her."

The Christmas bells clash out suddenly over the great city. The midnight is past, and I think of Him whose birth they wring for—that Baby who in the infinite wisdom and mercy of after years said to the Magdalen: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much!" and I wonder where on earth I may go this Christmas morning to find that blessed pardon and divine charity.

What is passing in the mind of Fane Swinton I never know, but he goes out from that chamber of death an altered man; and Society, with its hollow

deceptions and narrow prejudices, know him no more.

She lies there dead when the world wakes to its gayety and riotous mirth—that poor little brown, wicked thing, once bright as a berry of the yew, who had got away from the balm and the hush of her old safe home—the sloping hills and spreading vineyards! And far away the cotter's wife carries a heavy heart, thinking of the child who had come to her twenty years ago that morn.

One last look I take of the dead one and then go out from her forever, leaving the man by her side. Outside the carriages sweep in hundreds through the streets, and the fashionable throng rushes on with never a thought or care. But I feel very sober as I betake myself to my home; and as my children of noble birth rush to meet me with Christmas greetings, I think of that mother dead in the hospital, and of her little nameless one somewhere upon the earth, friendless and alone.

From the morning paper Lady Agathe reads to her husband an account of the accident: "A drunken woman got run over by last night's express—the one I told you about, you know."

That is all! but it does not matter; she is gone where no earthly sentence can touch her—to be judged by a judgment not human and a charity divine. And it upon this morning Mary has any favor to ask of her Son, in the name of her dear maternity, I think it is mercy for such as she.

Thank heaven! man's laws are not God's!

## IN A POCKET.

"WELL, well," said good Adonijah Courtney, raising his eyes heavenward, "Providence has indeed afflicted us; but should we mourn as those without hope? Nay, surely not, since all flesh is weak and unable to meet and withstand temptation in its own strength; and our dear boy, Lionel—ah, why did our brother, Reuben, bestow upon his offspring that brutish name, though he has made us to grieve for his shortcoming—still gives us hope of his repentance. All is not lost, sister Keziah," and he pressed his spinster companion's withered and trembling hand reassuringly, as he bade his pretty, tearful niece (the culprit's sister), to re-read the letter of confession that had that evening burst like a bombshell in their midst and caused the good and simple-minded people great sorrow and anxiety of mind.

Lily Courtney held her brother's singularly jerky and illegible-written epistle open before her. Indeed she had never closed it since it came, but continued to pore over its shaky characters in the vague hope of gleaming a ray of light to illumine the murky record. At her uncle's request, she tried hard to swallow the painful lump that had been apparently growing in her throat ever since her startled mind took in the wretched tidings. She was a gentle, shy-mannered girl, of great personal beauty and (wondrous combination) equal modesty; but her strong, and as yet untamed, trait of character was unselfish devotion. She loved the dear old pair who had received her brother and herself in their early orphanage, and who had given their every energy and thought to the education and moral training of the otherwise friendless children. Without ever having been outside of Greenville—since she came there a little girl ten years before—Lily knew quite well that her aunt and uncle were singularly innocent and unworldly people, and though she could not help but fall into many of their primitive ways and illogical views, she was quite sure that neither of them was fitted to start out in Winter and travel to the great city where her poor dear brother was in trouble. She had quite resolved from the first that she would go to him herself, and when her voice trembled and the choking sensation oppressed her most as she read on, it was when the conflict between her native timidity and courageous sense of duty occurred.

The note was dated a day or two before Christmas and written in pencil so badly that it was difficult to read. Its style, too, was unlike Lionel's; in fact, there was no way to account for its abrupt and uneven character except the true one. The dreadful snares and temptations of that frightful city, against which the elder pair, who had never passed a night in its polluted air, had so faithfully warned him—had seized him in their illusive grasp. He had succumbed; he had strayed and fallen from grace; some evil being had robbed him, and now, contrite and helpless, he called homewards for relief. His scrawling epistle ran thus:

"MY DEAR UNCLE AND AUNT—I don't want Lily to be alarmed (poor child, it was she who had opened the note), so I do not include her. I have had a misfortune—I trusted to myself in these slippery ways. I was a fool not to listen to counsel—but I thought I knew it all; the result is, I became lost, grew confused and fell. Do not alarm yourself, dear aunt and uncle; I might have been much worse. As it is, in the confusion, I lost my pocketbook. The people among whom, on coming to myself, I proved to be, are not of the class for me to remain dependent on for a single day. Please send or come. Inclose address. Regret to alarm you. With love, LIONEL."

In a different hand was a complicated direction, which Lily carefully detached and put in her pocketbook.

That was the first step taken—the rest followed quickly:

"Uncle and aunt, I am going to the city. My mind is quite made up, and please do not say No. You, dear uncle, are suffering with one of your worst attacks of rheumatism, and aunt's head is threatened with her regular January neuralgia. Martha is needed to look after you both, and Simon can't leave the barn, poor old man. As for me, I was nine years old when I was there last, but I remember the streets perfectly. I could even go to this place"—she pointed to the direction in the pocketbook—"after a little studying of the localities."

She spoke so confident, looked so brave, and withal so hopeful, that the good couple could only accept her strength of purpose as providential, and "sent" for the trying occasion.

They had many doubts and anxieties still, but a feeling of thankfulness prevailed over all the rest.

"The child is wonderfully led, it seems," said Adonijah; "she speaks as if she was sure of the way before her, and I believe that she will be sustained, Keziah."

"Yes," affirmed the good spinster, though she spoke a little tremulously. "I also feel to rejoice that she is able to meet the emergency. There is no time to be lost: she must go in the first train, and we must to-night prepare everything for the morrow."

It was over. On Christmas day she sat in the centre of the middle car of the train—safest place in case of accidents. The cold air had frozen the tears on her cheeks; she looked through the blurred window at the dark outline of the old family carriage which Simon was driving up the lane homewards, and sent the venerable occupants a silent kiss pressed against the unsympathetic glass. Dear souls! they were talking of her, and already regretting having permitted her to go.

"Innocent young fellow, that she is," said Aunt Keziah, with a stifled sob, "if her brother fell into trouble, how will she escape?"

"She has had much good counsel, and she will heed it," said Adonijah.

So she had. It made her head dizzy trying to remember it all—it was impossible. She could never hope to retain so many wise admonitions; therefore, as a too heavily freighted ship will in stress of weather part with her less valuable cargo, and keep only such precious goods as shall permit easy sailing, so Lily, with her pocketbook containing all her money and the address of her brother to guard, allowed all else to slip by for the present, being convinced that they were the essential treasures of her journey.

The train was a full one; at every station new people came in, and at the second place from Greenville a gentleman, of excellent appearance and pleasing manner, came in and found no vacant place except the one beside Lily.

He wore a handsome sable-collar round his overcoat; in Lily's startled eye it seemed like a partial mask to his face, and when, pointing to the seat, he bowed his request to be allowed to share it, she assented with a start, and immediately placed her hand protectively over her coat-pocket where her money was. She had merely turned her face once towards the newcomer; that once, however, was quite sufficient to show him a pure, oval outline, eyes soft as velvet and lovely brown in color, a straight nose, and a mobile, red-lipped mouth—a little compressed and formal in its set—but sweet as an opening bud in June.

Apparently the stranger was susceptible to female loveliness; he threw off his fur wrapping, adjusted his coat-collar, and gave a becoming touch to his hat. He was young and good-looking, and seemed decidedly drawn towards the face that had been quickly averted from his view.

Lily looked steadily out of the window, and tried to think of her dear, but unfortunate brother, who had left home to enjoy a brief holiday before choosing a profession, and so soon fallen into life's "slippery ways."

"What a pity it is that evil lurks under the most pleasing exteriors," she said to herself, with a sigh, and then she took a furtive peep out of the corner of her eye at her handsome companion, which caused her to sigh again.

Yes, he was very prepossessing, but it was of just such as he that she had always been told to beware. Evil delighted to put on an alluring guise; but it was to entrap the unwary, and a charming, smiling exterior was too frequently the mask of the tempter.

These solemn warnings all recurred to her mind faithfully, but somehow they gave her no great pleasure.

"It is a pity!" she said, and looked out on the wintry prospect, with a fine sharp snow sifting through the gray air and the bare tree-boughs shivering in the wind.

The shawl that Aunt Keziah's thoughtfulness had added to her niece's wrappings, slipped off her knee upon the floor; the observant stranger quickly stooped to lift it. Lily bent down also, their faces nearly met, and both were forced to smile.

"I beg your pardon!" said Lily, mechanically. Oh, how her face flushed the minute after! She had been the first to speak, and had actually addressed herself to a stranger!

"I am the one to apologize! I am very awkward, I assure!" cried the young man, elaborately replacing the wrappings.

Lily recovered her self-possession, bowed coldly, and again took refuge in peering into the gloomy outer world.

Suddenly, without a note of preparation, they shot into a huge dark tunnel. The transition from day to night was so swift that Lily almost screamed, and, do what she would to recover from the shock, her heart kept beating so that she could scarcely breathe.

Here was a situation totally unlooked for. Neither her aunt nor her uncle had prepared her mind for this—alone in the darkness, at the mercy of this deceptive and wily stranger, who had, no doubt, many subtle mechanical contrivances at command for extracting pocket-books from the possession of country victims!

Her breath came shorter; she fancied she already felt something touch her pocket. She was no coward—no, she would defend herself—she would not submit to lose her treasure—those crisp green notes of large denomination that were to save Lionel, and put him straight in the paths of rectitude once more. The thought gave her courage; she slipped her hand softly along the thick beaver cloth, plunged it quickly into the pocket and caught a man's hand firmly in her own! Ah! well, it was done, and she had it in a strong tight grip, from which, strange to say, it made no effort to free itself; but, though triumphant, no one could ever tell what that act of justice, that defense of right, had cost her!

As she held the guilty member prisoner, her tender woman's heart softened and plead for the offender against her sterner judgment. It was a struggle and a hard one—he might be young in crime, the victim of temptation, of untoward cir-

cumstances; she would not give him over to punishment; she would rather shield him from retribution; but she must protect her money.

A pale, grayish atmosphere about them lasts an instant, then out they flash into the clear, bright day, upon which the laggard, wintry sun has just poured a welcome flood of light, showing clearly to her own horrified vision and the deeply meditative gaze of her companion her little right hand thrust deep into his coat-pocket (which closely adjoined her own), and clinched with all the force of its pretty pinkish fingers around his quietly imprisoned digits.

There are some things that happen in everybody's life of which the one most nearly concerned knows nothing. Lily Courtney never till her dying day could tell how her hand got out of her neighbor's pocket. She somehow came to herself by-and-by in a dazed way, her forehead resting against the window-glass, and a succession of crimson blushes chasing each other over her burning cheeks. Covertly and by slow degrees she looked around. The seat was empty, the suspected pocket—of whom she would never think without heartfelt shame—had left her to her ruminations.

They were not very agreeable ones. She had been taught that we could not be too suspicious—she was ready henceforth to deny the assertion entirely.

"I wish I had been robbed rather than have put my hand—!" she could go no further even in thought. A hot blush always interrupted her. "I hope I may never, never see that gentleman again!" she declared, energetically; yet even as she said so, she knew she did not quite mean it. There was time for no further mental conflict—thank goodness, there was the city! It was two in the afternoon.

Lily was just in that mood when one ceases to be confidential even with oneself. She would not acknowledge that she saw the stranger as she crossed the depot; she would not admit that she was dubious about the direction she should take to reach her brother; in fine, she was vexed and chagrined, uncertain and excited, and could not recognize herself as the resolute young heroine who had left Greenville that morning, relying on a store of good counsel, backed by her own sagacity.

At a little distance from the station she hailed a car, after hastily reading its lettered sides. When she consulted the conductor, she learned she was being carried out of her way, and with a shouted line or two of directions ringing after her she descended and took another with a varied but unsatisfactory result. She wished that she had not imbibed a prejudice against backs and their drivers as being the accessories of mysterious disappearances she had read of in those awful city papers; but, tired and distracted as she was, after two hours' aimless car-changing and mistaking of points of the compass, she still could not trust herself, with night approaching, to one of those conveyances. She resolved rather to go on foot, asking her way block by block, and she swallowed back her tears and set out sturdily despite the cold. She forgot to be hungry, and was at last fairly on her way.

Then she saw—she could not tell just with what feeling—directly in advance of her the gentleman with the sable collar going the same way. After a time she ceased to ask and followed him blindly. She was half-benumbed now, and she murmured to herself—"I began by suspecting him—now I am trusting him in the dark!" True enough, night was coming on; they were turning into mean little streets, having come back in the neighborhood of the depot. A handsome carriage—whose driver seemed to have waited for the stranger—stood at the corner and received a gesture of direction from him. All three—he, Lily and the carriage, paused at a narrow door. It bore the number, and was in the street, Lionel had sent to Greenville. The gentleman knocked, then stood back for his companion to enter; the door opened into a close, dirty little room, where poor Lionel lay, on an untidy settee, in the act of being made ready for removal by a kind and genial old gentleman, a little hasty in temper, it seemed, for he called out at sight of the young man whose pocket Lily had explored—"Well, you've got here at last, have you, Frank Bently! I've waited long enough, I should say, and this poor boy suffering from a fracture and fever in a place like this. The people who picked him up insensible off the ice out beyond in the next street, have been very kind," he added, to the German shoemaker and his wife who stood by. "You found him with his head cut by his fall, his pocketbook lost or stolen, and carried him here where he wrote home—and this morning got his senses sufficiently about him to send for me, which was what he should have done at first." The doctor—for he was the doctor with whom Lionel had it in mind to study by-and-by—talked on in this strain to relieve an evident embarrassment.

Young Dr. Bently, his son, explained (while the sister and brother indulged in a singularly fervent embrace, considering that they had been but two days separated), that he had received his father's message per family servant on his arrival at the depot, at two o'clock, but that he was detained by a pressing and most imperative engagement—(he did not explain that said engagement was his own resolution to follow respectfully and unseen to her destination the pretty timid little Lily, of Greenville, who had, by the odd process of entering his pocket, stolen his heart. Such things will do to keep, as will also Lily's pleased amazement at the family misinterpretation of poor Lionel's letter, written in pain and fever. He, too, proud of his early recollections of the city ways, started on foot over its icy pavements and met with a physical, not a moral fall. That little mistake was explained and laughed over, but Lily did not want hers to share the same fate—to keep it secret she even bribed Frank Bently.

Once he threatened—"Oh, do not tell about my hand!" she whispered, entreatingly.

"I won't if you will give it to me," was the answer, in the same key.

Well—Aunt Keziah liked him, Uncle Adonijah found him suitable, and they were married on Christmas Eve—a year after her adventure "In a Pocket!"

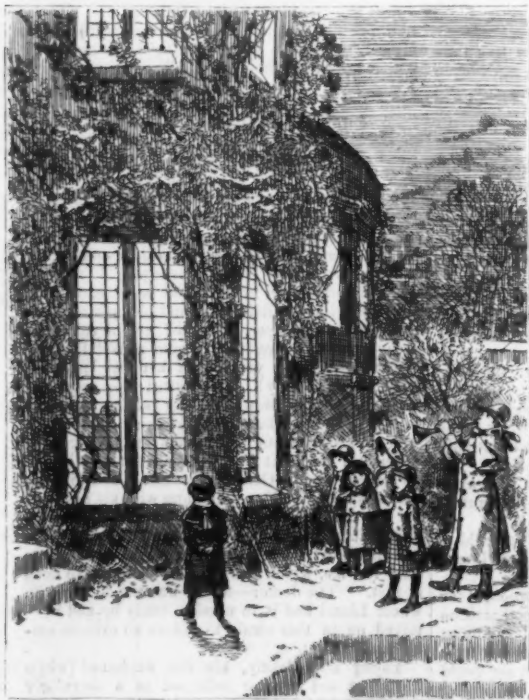




"CLEAR AND SWEET THE NUNS ARE SINGING."

## THE DREAM OF SISTER AGNES.

In the snowy moonlit midnight  
Faint and far the chimes are ringing;  
In the cloister's gray old chapel  
Clear and sweet the nuns are singing;  
In the shimmer of the candles,  
High above the altar, stands,  
White and sad, the Christ, outstretching  
On the cross His patient hands.



"THE WAITS SING UNDER MY WINDOW."

And the pale Sister Agnes  
Watches, with weary eyes,  
Between her face and His image,  
The rolling incense rise;  
And she hears her own soul sobbing  
As the music swells and sighs:

"The stones are cold in the chancel,  
Cold as the cruel snow;  
The moon is cold in heaven—  
And the frozen earth below  
Lies dead on the breast of midnight,  
Frozen to death, I know!  
Even the yellow candles  
Look cold, like those icy stars

That all night long are watching  
Beyond my window-bars;  
The writhing incense shivers  
Like an outcast soul in pain—  
The cold has crept into my bosom  
And wound about my brain.

"And that is why I am dreaming;  
I have forgotten the prayer,  
And the faces around me waver  
Far off in the misty air.  
There stands the blazing altar,  
But it is not that I see—  
Only the twinkling tapers  
In the boughs of a Christmas-tree.  
There hang the wreaths of holly,  
And the white-starred mistletoe,  
And the shadows dart and flicker  
In the great fire's ruddy glow—  
It kindles even the midnight,  
And warms the breast of the snow!

"I am dreaming—only dreaming—  
Hark! what do the voices say?



"UNDER THE CHRISTMAS TAPERS SHINE THE OLD FACES FAIR!"

The waits sing under my window,  
Out in the dawning gray—  
Singing of Bethlehem's stable,  
And the Child who was born to-day!  
Or is it the nuns who are chanting,  
Chanting sweet and slow,  
A rhyme of forgotten childhood,  
Lost so long ago?

"Under the holly branches,  
In the yule-log's flame and flare,  
Under the Christmas tapers  
Shine the old faces fair!  
Round me the warmth comes creeping  
Of arms, that clasped and clung  
Stronger than arms of a mother,  
When love and dreams were young!  
So warm—so strong!—they held me  
Till Death breathed cold between,  
And I think I died, with the dreaming,  
And all that might have been!

"Now it is cold for ever,  
And the world lies white and dead,  
With the snow for a shroud wrapped round her,  
And the stars lit at her head.  
Are they stars, or the Christmas candles,  
That shine in the icy air?  
The Christ from His cross has vanished  
And a little Child stands there—  
Stretching His hand to lead me  
Out of the cold—ah, where?"

Clearly through the frosty silence  
In the tower the chimes are ringing;  
In the gray old chapel's choir  
Loud and sweet the nuns are singing;  
Only one is kneeling dumbly—  
In her wide and weary eyes,  
On her lips, like marble carven,  
Death's unfathomed wonder lies—  
For the mystic Guide hath led her  
Smiling, into Paradise.



"THE CHRIST FROM HIS CROSS HAS VANISHED, AND A LITTLE CHILD STANDS THERE."

Out of the gates of sunrise  
The herald dawn breaks sweet;  
Over the hills and valleys  
Day comes with shining feet;  
Over the heaving ocean  
And the plains of ice and snow,  
And over the Holy City  
Where Christ walked long ago.  
Over the eyes unseeing  
Wakens the Christmas morn—  
Unto the dead and living  
Stretches the Hand forgiving—  
And the Child is born!

G. A. DAVIS.